THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

An Illustrated Weekly
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Beginning

LOOT—By Arthur Somers Roche

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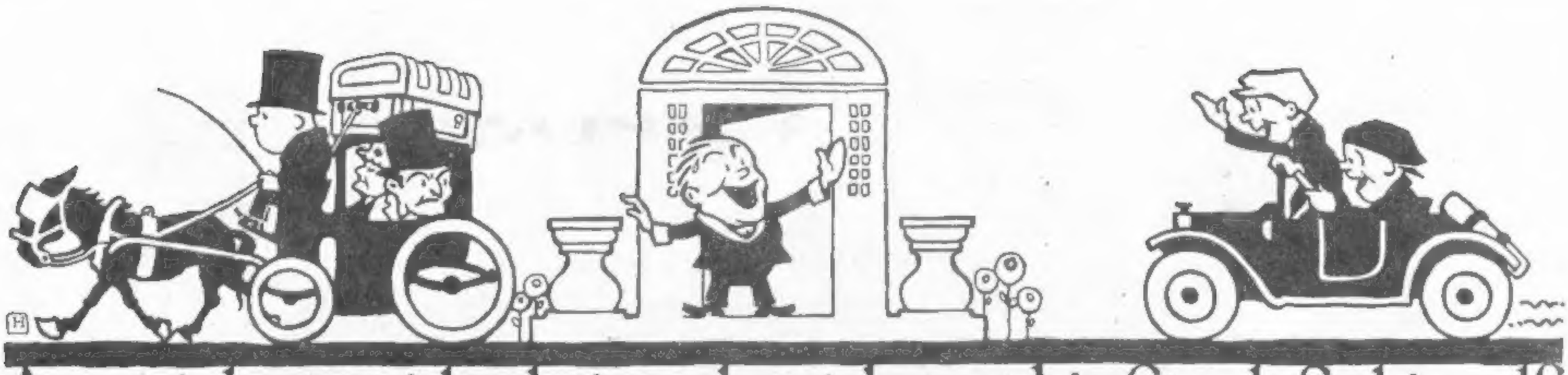

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Automobile Tires - Hand Made

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Published Weekly

The Curtis Publishing Company
Independence Square
Philadelphia

London: 6, Henrietta Street
Covent Garden, W.C.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

Founded A°D° 1728 by Benj. Franklin

Copyright, 1916
by The Curtis Publishing Company in
the United States and Great Britain

Entered at the Philadelphia Post-Office
as Second-Class Matter

Entered as Second-Class Matter at the
Post-Office Department
Ottawa, Canada

Volume 188 PHILADELPHIA, MAY 27, 1916 Number 48

LOOT

By ARTHUR SOMERS ROCHE

ILLUSTRATED BY M. LEONE BRACKER

THE necklace will be finished next week, Gwen. Arabin cabled me to-day."

Lady Gwendolyn Brathwaite, only daughter of the Marquis of Moriton, permitted herself to become impulsive. Under pretense of patting the cloth into place she allowed her slim fingers to rest a moment on the wrist of the speaker. Also, she flashed him a brilliant smile.

"You're a dear, Brenner! And when will it get here—the week after?"

Brenner Carlow colored with pleasure at the touch and the smile. There were times—rare, of course, but they did happen—when he wondered if anyone that really loved could be so cold, so aloof, so unemotional as Lady Gwendolyn. Her tendernesses, whether of eye, voice or hand, seemed reserved for her father, her dogs, her horses. The multimillionaire American she was to marry received mighty few of them.

Still, she was going to marry him. That was something. From the heights of the station to which she had been born the Lady Gwendolyn had stooped to lift him to her side. That she was also lifting to her side some scores of millions of good American dollars was beside the question. What was money as compared with caste?

And the caste of the Brathwaites was, royalty alone excepted, the highest in England. Lady Gwendolyn was the daughter of the eighteenth Marquis of Moriton. Her husband would, of right, enter the hitherto most impregnable strongholds of British society. And it was at this prospect that the mean little heart of Brenner Carlow glowed.

Mean, that is, from the standpoint of snobbishness. So far as money was concerned, Carlow was openhanded enough. Proof enough of that was given in his reference to the necklace, concerning which Arabin's, one of the most fashionable jewelry concerns in America, had cabled him to-day. Two million dollars is more than a trifle, even to a man who possesses fifty-odd millions. Yet that was the price of the bauble which was to adorn the throat of Lady Gwendolyn Carlow.

Lady Gwendolyn Carlow! That name meant a great deal. It would be a great match. Unfortunately the last half dozen Marquises of Moriton had been extravagant. Beyond the entailed properties, with rent rolls that were pitiful in comparison with the income of even a moderately successful tradesman, the present wearer of the title possessed nothing save the suave manners and fearlessness of debt for which his ancestors had been famous. The millions of Brenner Carlow were more than welcome. Some of them might possibly be diverted to the heir presumptive, Lord Moriton's nephew. At any rate, Carlow had agreed to settle enough on Lady Gwen to enable her to help out her dear old father. Society was a unit in declaring that the match was eminently suitable, all things considered. Of course Gwen was a beautiful girl, and it was too bad that someone of her own rank had not the money to compete with Carlow. But one can't expect everything in this world. Gwen could have done worse.

Carlow and Lady Gwendolyn were lunching at a restaurant, accompanied only by Lady Agatha Brathwaite, aunt of Gwen. It was the first time in six months that Gwen had appeared in public with Carlow. The death of her mother, a week after the announcement of the engagement, had made her cancel all social engagements. To-day was her first emerging from the semiobscurity demanded by mourning. And Carlow, elated at being seen with her, at being recognized by the fashionable throng, was in no mood to deny her any request.

"The week after?" he echoed. "Why, I'd thought of running across in a couple of months to wind up some affairs and of bringing it back then. We aren't to be married for six months yet, you know, Gwen. You could hardly wear it before we are married."

"But I can see it, can't I?" demanded Gwen. "Why can't you send for it? If you love me," and she lowered her voice, "you'll do that."

"Why—why, I suppose I could. I imagine it would be just as safe over here as in Arabin's vaults."

"After we're married," said Gwendolyn softly—Lady Agatha was extremely busy with her luncheon—"it won't be in vaults all the time."

"Why, of course it would be safe enough," said Carlow.

"Then cable Arabin to send it over at once," demanded Gwen.

"I'd like to see it myself before I closed with them," he objected half-heartedly.

"Aren't they reliable?"

"A Man Wise to What You've Got Up Your Sleeve Wouldn't Waste Time in a Chop-Suey Joint"

"Oh, my, yes! If Arabin's say they've complied with my specifications, why, they've done it—that's all. Still, two millions, Gwen!"

"Four hundred thousand pounds!" Gwendolyn's face flushed faintly. Then she pouted. "And can't you go—now?" Then, as his eyes darkened, she leaned impulsively across the table. "Isn't there someone you know who knows diamonds? That you could trust to examine the necklace—see if it's up to specifications and everything? That would make it so much quicker. Of course I don't want you running over to New York until you have to."

"Right in the middle of my coaching season too," he said. Then, as he read the disappointment in her eyes: "There's my London solicitors, you know. One of them's going across for me to-morrow. Matter of a stockholders' meeting. Some outsiders trying to get control. My friends have begged me to have someone there if I couldn't come myself. Of course I could have had my American attorneys attend to it, but there might have been some slip. And it would have got out—somehow. Sort of surprise. My man from here walks in and surprises the outsiders with my proxies. They don't expect him—better that way. Now he—if he knew anything about jewels ——"

"Brenner! You dear! And he'd be back ——"

"Oh, in a fortnight," said Carlow.

"And he sails to-morrow? Brenner, you must see him at once."

"And if I do?"

"I'm going to be at home this evening. No other callers."

"It's very unusual, Mr. Carlow," said Mr. Moggrage, senior member of the firm of Moggrage, Jones, Roberts & Crossgrove, solicitors, The Middle Temple.

"But you've just said the beggar knows jewels, haven't you?" inquired Carlow. "He has only to compare the necklace with this drawing. And, as I've said, we can trust Arabin's to have made it only of the most perfectly matched and graduated stones. It's the design. I'm very fussy about that."

"It's a heavy responsibility, Mr. Carlow. Suppose he's robbed?"

"Impossible!" ejaculated Carlow. "Arabin's will give him an escort to the boat. Once aboard, it will be locked in the purser's safe. When the vessel reaches this side we'll have an escort meet him. All he has to do is to examine the design and setting. If it's satisfactory he turns over my check to Arabin's. That's all there is to it."

"I'll call Mr. Hildreth in," said Moggrage.

He did so; and a moment later, after introductions had been effected, the senior broached the matter to the younger man.

"Why, I don't see why I shouldn't," said Hildreth. He smiled at Carlow—a frank, ingenuous smile that was attractive. "But, as I understand this proxy matter, Mr. Carlow, no one—not even your friends—knows just what to expect. You have assured your friends you would aid them, but have left them in the dark as to how. Isn't that it?"

"Yes," said Carlow. "I have promised them that my stock should be voted with theirs. Perhaps they think one of my American attorneys will vote it; but the instructions which I have given Mr. Moggrage, and which doubtless he has given you, will come as a surprise."

Hildreth nodded.

"Of course, Mr. Carlow. Your American attorneys would naturally tell your friends just where they stood. If it became known that your American attorneys possessed your proxies, and refused to tell just how long they'd vote a certain way, your friends would suspect something and combine against you."

"All these details you've mastered or Moggrage wouldn't be sending you," said Carlow. "About the necklace: Will you attend to that? I'll cable Arabin's to-day that you are coming."

"That's exactly it," said Hildreth. "Even though I hold credentials from you, and your check, Arabin's will naturally be a little averse to handing over two million dollars in diamonds—the check might be a forgery and I might be a rascal, you know."

"But if I cable them in my code, which only they and my attorneys know?"

"And then won't it get out to the railroad people that you're sending a man over? Won't they suspect that I'm coming on the railroad matter too? Won't they, unable to get any definite promises from me, combine against me in some way?"

Carlow laughed.

"You needn't be alarmed, Hildreth. It's a very simple matter to tell Arabin's to keep your coming secret, isn't it? I doubt that you would be suspected; but—well, Arabin's won't leak. . . . And you'll do it?"

"Why, of course," said Hildreth.

A little later Carlow departed; but he left behind him a check for two million dollars, payable to Arabin's, credentials for Hildreth to present to Arabin, the original design of the necklace, to be studied on shipboard by Hildreth, and an atmosphere of gratitude.

"I'm sorry," said Moggrage; "but I didn't like to suggest to him that he should send someone else. He's a valuable client. But—it robs you of the tour you'd planned. It's a shame to have to hurry back a day or two after you land. I'd hoped you'd have a real vacation. It was promised you. And it isn't a solicitor's business—acting as retriever for necklaces."

"But Mr. Carlow is our richest client," smiled Hildreth. "No doubt I shall be jolly glad to turn right round and come home. America is all very well, I suppose; but it isn't England."

"Crude place, I've always understood," said Mr. Moggrage. "As you say, you'll doubtless be glad to return after all. . . . Still—four hundred thousand pounds' worth of diamonds—I shall be uneasy, my boy."

II

WADE HILDRETH was by no means an ignorant or narrow young man. A public-school product and an Oxford man, the death of his father had given him opportunity to give up the jewelry business, which he did not like, and to prepare himself for the bar, to which he felt he was genuinely called. His father had long been a client of Moggrage, Jones, Roberts & Crossgrove, and with that firm he had been reading law for several years and was now on the verge of a partnership. Inheritor of a comfortable fortune, he could easily have lived on his income had he chosen to do so. Instead, he slaved like the veriest clerk. He had only two hobbies—a passion for collecting odd designs for jewelry—inherited, no doubt—and for playing tennis; and but one idiosyncrasy—a hatred of lifts, or elevators, which was almost a horror, and for which he could only account by the fact that his mother had been seriously injured in one a long time before.

He had done the usual Continental traveling of young men of means. He had read rather widely. Yet, when from the deck of his steamer he first glimpsed Manhattan's wonderful skyline, it came to him, as it does to most foreigners, that, whatever had been his previous conceptions of America, he must prepare to revise them.

Leaning on the rail, drinking in that jagged profile, Hildreth felt a dismayed sensation. To think that he must turn round and leave this new country before he had done more than pass through the gates! Oh, well; he could see something of New York anyway, even though a glimpse of the rest of the country was denied him. He had to-night, Tuesday, and what of Wednesday he did not spend at the stockholders' meeting. He read again the wireless message he had received earlier in the day:

WADE HILDRETH, S. S. Lucantia: If unable to meet you at dock will call at Hotel Battenberg to-night. Room engaged there for you. (Signed) JAMES F. ARABIN.

"Devilish kind of him," said Hildreth. "Still, he ought to be polite to a man who has it in his power to reject a two-million-dollar necklace. I suppose, though, Carlow asked him to be civil. Oh, well; it saves me trouble. I don't have to bother about my accommodations. So much more time to see the city."

He took a last look at the enthralling, staggering, amazing city that lay before him. Then he went below to look after his bags. A little later, attended by a well-tipped steward, he was on deck again. Later he was on the dock, standing with the others whose last names began with the letter H, waiting for the customs officials to get through with him.

He was free at last and a porter carried his bags—he had no steamer trunk, not having thought it necessary for a short stay—to where a row of taxis stood. Arabin, then, had been unable to meet him. There was no question of Arabin's having been unable to identify him. He had stood with the other H's long enough for the jeweler to have found him. And he did not linger, for the reason that he was anxious to enter the city as soon as possible.

He did not notice that a gentlemanly appearing young man had kept him under observation from the moment he had entered the huge customs shed. He did not notice that this person followed him from the shed to the row of taxis; that he signaled a chauffeur, who promptly approached him. He did not notice that his porter rebuffed several other chauffeurs and followed the man who had been signaled, and that the gentleman who had done the signaling, smiling relievedly, immediately climbed into a limousine, which shot down a side street.

Observing none of these things—if he had he might have thought that the well-dressed man was merely a tout for some hotel assuring himself that the disembarked passenger would patronize the one he represented; indeed, the porter who had been bribed to deliver the bags to a certain chauffeur had some such idea—Hildreth tipped his porter, gave the name of the hotel mentioned in Arabin's wireless, and started to step into the taxi. He drew back suddenly.

"I say," he said to the chauffeur, "the Battenberg is in which direction from here?"

"North," and the chauffeur pointed.

"It's not easy to get lost, is it? I've understood that the streets all run north and south, and east and west."

"Well, they do mostly, except 'way downtown," said the chauffeur. "From here uptown they all run that way."

"Then I'll walk," said Hildreth decidedly. "I want to see your charming city. Take my bags to the Battenberg and—what will the charge be?"

"I've Set My Heart on the Carlow Necklace. Is That Reason Enough?"

The chauffeur colored.

"Say, you might get lost at that. You'd better let me take you to your hotel first."

"Thank you; but I rather think I can look after myself," smiled Hildreth. "A dollar and a half? Six and threepence, eh? Jove, but things are steep here now, aren't they? Here you are, my man, with a shilling—a quarter—for yourself. And what's your number? Seven-nought-three-four. No harm done, my man. You needn't be angry. You don't know me and I don't know you, and I'm trusting my bags to you. I say, if you don't care to take the bags up there I don't doubt but that I can find somebody who will. What do you say?"

"Why—why—that's all right, sir. Of course I'll take them up. But you'd better ride, sir."

He said this last so anxiously that the Englishman stared.

"Oh, I say now, I'm not an infant. I'll come to no harm. Mind—the Battenberg."

A rather amazing thing to do; but Hildreth had been born and bred in London, where a cabby would think twice—oh, two hundred times—before he would run off with a gentleman's baggage. Having procured the man's number, Hildreth imagined that he had been the very essence of precaution. He did not bother to cast a glance behind him as, delighted with the thought of really stretching his legs after the confinement on shipboard, as ready to absorb impressions as a child at a circus, he dashed across West Street and plunged into the city.

If he had looked behind him he would have been amazed at the expression on the chauffeur's face. If he had been able to hear the man's words he would have been still further amazed; for in a very ecstasy of passion the man made as though to throw away the money Hildreth had given him. He caught himself, however, as though afraid his action would be noticed; but he could not control the pallor, the extreme pallor, of his face, and his lips trembled as he whispered:

"What'll he say? What'll he say?"

It took him, so nervous was he, nearly two minutes to crank his car. And Hildreth did not look backward as he proceeded along the crosstown street.

Nothing he had seen in Europe was like New York, Hildreth decided. He had made his way to Broadway, thence downtown to the skyscraper district, and from there uptown to Madison Square and along Fifth Avenue to Central Park. A long walk, and it had taken three hours; but, like the average Englishman, Hildreth was a great pedestrian.

The more he walked, the more his preconceived notions, which had begun to fall from him when first he glimpsed the city from the Lucantia's deck, left him, to be replaced by wonderment and regret. The Italian Colony he had passed through on his way from West Street to Broadway, the amazing buildings downtown, the mammoth hotels uptown, the throngs afoot, in carriage, in auto, of the Avenue—all these were but the prelude, he felt bitterly, to a greater show that he was not to see. And New York itself—New York was but a prelude itself.

He stood a moment on the corner of Fifty-ninth Street, staring across the busy plaza, flanked by great hostelries and the green of the Park. His watch told him it was almost six o'clock—time for him to make his way to his hotel to await the arrival of Arabin.

A policeman told him how to get to the Battenberg. It was not far and he reached it in ten minutes.

"Ah, yes; Mr. Hildreth," said a clerk as he registered. "Your things have arrived and are already in the room engaged for you by Mr. Arabin." He summoned a bell boy. "Show Mr. Hildreth to six-forty-one."

"This way, sir," said the boy.

He led the way to an elevator and stood aside for the Englishman to enter. Hildreth hesitated.

"What floor is my room on?" he demanded of the boy.

"Six-forty-one, sir—sixth floor."

One moment Hildreth hesitated. There is a shamefaced pride that bids us do the thing we do not wish to do lest people think ill of us. There is a greater pride that bids us do as we wish, regardless of wagging tongues or contemptuous thoughts. If it were necessary for Hildreth to ride in an elevator—if a matter of importance depended on such riding—he would do so; but where it was not necessary he would refuse, regardless of sneers. As great heights torture some persons, so a ride in an elevator tortured Hildreth.

It was his one idiosyncrasy, as has been told; and, being perfectly normal in all other ways, he felt no great shame in indulging himself in this one matter.

"Come back to the desk," he said.

He spoke to the clerk.

"I say. I don't care about being situated on the sixth floor. Too many flights of stairs."

"Plenty of elevators," suggested the clerk with a lift of the eyebrows.

"And I don't use 'em," said Hildreth shortly. "I walk. Have you a room on the second floor?"

Hotel clerks are used to idiosyncrasies; this one, beyond the lifted eyebrows, gave no further sign that Hildreth's dislike for elevators was at all remarkable.

"I Suppose My Understudy's Heart Leaped for Joy When I Fell"

"Certainly, Mr. Hildreth," he said. "Boy, show Mr. Hildreth to two hundred and four. I'll have a porter transfer your things immediately, Mr. Hildreth."

And a few moments later it was done. Hildreth dismissed the porter and turned on the water in his bath. Half an hour later he was dressed for the evening. Undoubtedly Arabin would offer him some form of entertainment to-night and he wished to be properly attired for it; but shortly after seven the pangs of hunger assailed him. His long walk had given a fillip to an appetite that was always healthy. He decided to wait no longer on the off chance that Arabin would wish him to dine with him. He transferred the design Carlow had given him from the business suit he had worn to his evening clothes. He could not forbear glancing appreciatively at the drawing as he did so.

A wonderfully beautiful and original design! He would not have thought Carlow possessed such taste. But then he guessed—and rightly, too—Carlow had probably had some able artist design it for him.

Of course there was no chance of his seeing the necklace to-night. That would not come until to-morrow anyway. Indeed, he would have postponed seeing it until Thursday just before sailing time, had it been the right thing to do. He begrudged every moment taken from sight-seeing; but, of course, he should have to examine the thing to-morrow and see whether any minor alterations were necessary to make it conform exactly to the design. He could not trust himself to give a proper decision on the very day he sailed, rushed as he would be then.

But, though he knew he could not see the jewels to-night, he carried the design in his pocket. It was such a beautiful thing, so wonderfully conceived, that he liked to have it with him.

The Battenberg is not the gayest of New York's hotels, nor is it the dullest. It aims at the happy medium between the two. The dining room was thronged with well-groomed men and women, and among the latter were a few faces that made Hildreth smile with impersonal appreciation. He was rather glad he was able to dine alone; it gave him opportunity to observe, to drink in the atmosphere of the place.

A perfect dinner, served well, was finished at last. He lighted a cigar and strolled out into the lobby. There he sat down to await the arrival of Arabin. He hoped Arabin was a young man and that he would propose seeing or doing something worth while. The electric atmosphere of Manhattan did not incline Hildreth to a quiet, chatty evening. He wanted to see things, to do things. And he hoped Arabin would hurry up and not make him waste a perfectly good evening. He had finished his cigar and was just becoming impatient when a bell boy called his name.

"You're wanted at the telephone, Mr. Hildreth."

He led Hildreth to a booth.

"This Mr. Hildreth?" asked a cordial voice. "This is Arabin. Awfully sorry not to have been able to meet you at the dock or get down to the hotel before this, Mr. Hildreth; but a very important business matter, which couldn't be postponed, has delayed me."

"That's all right," said Hildreth. "Don't let me interfere with you in any way. Very good of you to think of me at all."

He hoped Arabin would continue and tell him that he could not see him to-night. He wanted to wander out into the city. But he was doomed to disappointment.

"I'd planned on having you go to the theater with me—The Sunlight Girl. Bully show! And a little supper party afterward. But I find I can't get away for an hour or so. Suppose you run over to the theater and I'll join you later. It's the Vandergelt. I called up this afternoon and had them reserve seats. I've just phoned the box office and had them put one of the seats in your name. If you'll go over there now you'll not miss any of the show and I'll join you as soon as possible."

There was nothing for Hildreth to do but accept. He would have preferred to walk about the city, but Arabin had been extremely decent, looking up a hotel for him, and all that. It would be positively churlish to refuse. And, after all, one learned more about a country by talking with its inhabitants than by merely looking at them. The supper party would be most delightful, as he hardly imagined that Arabin meant that only they two should compose it.

So, with a pleasant word of thanks, he hung up the receiver. From the clerk he inquired the location of the Vandergelt Theater, and learned that he had only to walk west to Broadway, a street that he was told he could not mistake, and then a few blocks to the south.

He went to his room, got his hat, stick and coat, and a few minutes later had turned into Broadway. He was reluctant to leave it and enter the theater, but he did so; and the box-office clerk promptly handed him a ticket on mention of his name.

The overture was being played as he reached his seat, the second from the aisle, well down front in the center. In a moment the curtain rose. It was the usual thing, Hildreth guessed, the sort of thing that runs a year if it runs at all—tuneful music, clever dancing, and quantities of girls of various grades of pulchritude. He was young enough not to have entirely outgrown this sort of thing. He leaned back in his seat, prepared to enjoy himself, his coat and hat resting on the vacant seat that Arabin would claim later.

Twenty minutes passed—twenty minutes of antics on the part of the comedians, of dancing, of singing by lesser principals. Then there came the attitude of expectance on the part of the audience that heralded the entrance of the star. Hildreth had seen her name in the electric lights outside the theater and had been struck with its oddity, thinking it, of course, an assumed name. Morn Light did not sound like a real name. He supposed, of course, she was extremely blond. So the fact that she was a brunette surprised him.

And such a brunette! Hair as black as night, yet with a brilliance that reflected the footlights. Eyes that were large, limpid, soft, yet glowing with a light of merriment, as though she enjoyed her work. Supple, slim, graceful as only expert dancers can be, graceful without the underlying effect of muscular effort, she whirled onto the stage and dropped into a graceful curtsy before the comedian, supposed to be a reigning monarch of some mythical land, come to visit the star's country. She rose, retreated slightly, and began a silly song—Welcome to Our City—that yet had in it opportunity for the display of a sweet, charming, though not extremely powerful voice.

Hildreth leaned forward now. He was not the type to lose his heart to a vision across the footlights. He knew that such a vision's charms often lose their glamour in the searching sun of noonday. But this girl—she was different somehow. There was blood in her—good blood. That was evident in every move of her lithe body, every note of her pure voice. A lady, without doubt. And so lovely! He drew in his breath gaspingly, as scores of other impressionable young men were doing at sight of her. Yet Hildreth differed from these in that he was not impressionable—at least, never before to-night.

Somehow it seemed that she was singing the song to him; that she was welcoming him to the city. He wished that it was so. For the hundredth time, and more bitterly than heretofore, he cursed the commission of the necklace, which had robbed him of his vacation. Had he time, it might not be impossible for him to obtain an introduction to Miss Morn Light. Morn Light! The name possessed a quaint charm, more fascinating by reason of the midnight coloring of the girl's eyes and hair. Suddenly he hoped that it was her real name. And then he felt himself blushing to the very roots of his hair; for it seemed to him that the star was looking right at him, singing directly to him. He tried to meet her eyes. He was only twenty feet or so away from her as she came close to the footlights. Did she really see him? Was she really looking at him? There was nothing cheap, nothing flirtatious in her look; it was rather as though she recognized him. Absurd, of course, but—so it seemed.

Then he felt a chill of alarm. Her eyes had turned from him a moment; and as they came back, as though fascinated, they seemed frightened, seemed to hold horror in them. In the middle of the chorus of her song her voice faltered; the easy, graceful dance step slackened. Her ankle turned under her and she collapsed on the stage. Yet, even as she fell, it seemed to Hildreth that her eyes flashed him some message. Absurd, but—it seemed so.

There was a gasp from the audience that became one of relief as Morn Light sat up; that became one of pity as she seized her ankle in one hand as she sat there. The pantomime was sufficient. The orchestra ceased playing. The comedian rushed to her side and lifted her to her feet. He supported her to the wings. Other hands reached for her there and the comedian returned to the stage. He continued with the play, plainly improvising to cover the star's absence, and a round of handclapping greeted his efforts to carry off the contretemps.

Then, as the curtain went down, a man in evening dress, plainly the manager, stepped before it. He made a short announcement to the effect that Miss Light had twisted her ankle slightly, but would appear in the next act. She would do no dancing, however, and he craved the audience's indulgence. Applause greeted him and he retired. Hildreth's impotent excitement died. She was not seriously hurt; she would come on in the next act; he should see her again.

The man next him rose and, with an apology, passed by him. Other men were leaving the orchestra for cigar or drink. Hildreth felt that a smoke would soothe his restlessness. He, too, rose and stepped into the aisle. As he did so an usher spoke to him.

"Mr. Hildreth, sir?" His voice was very low and, had he not mentioned Hildreth's name, the Englishman would not have realized that he was being addressed.

"Yes," said Hildreth.

"Program, sir? You haven't one, have you, sir? Here, sir.

"Celia, Please Hurry. I Can't Sing if My Head Aches"

There's a note inside it, sir. Please don't read it here, sir. Read it in the smoking room. Please, sir!"

And the usher passed swiftly down the aisle, offering programs to those who did not have them already.

Hildreth was a bit more quick-witted, perhaps, than the majority of his countrymen. His first idea, of course, was that Arabin had written him some excuse for not joining him; but the usher had begged him not to read it here and had concealed the note inside the program. And the youth had seemed in most desperate, sober earnest. Hildreth, hat in hand, passed up the aisle. He went directly to the smoking room. There, shielded from observation by the program, behind which he carefully kept the note, he tore the envelope open and read the inclosure:

Come at once to my dressing room. Stage entrance. Doorkeeper will admit you. At once, please!

And it was signed by the girl he had just seen on the stage for the first time, whose eyes he thought had flashed him some sort of message—Morn Light!

III

AMAZED, Hildreth reread the note. It bore no salutation, but the envelope in which it had been inclosed was addressed: Mr. Wade Hildreth, third row, second seat left of center aisle.

Undoubtedly the note was meant for him, but how did the girl know his name? How had she recognized him? He had not been mistaken in his belief that her eyes had held recognition, he was now certain. And why did she want him to come to her? Why had the usher been so anxious that no one should observe Hildreth's note.

Flashed through his mind a dozen possibilities. Had either the outsiders or the insiders in the railroad struggle, at which he was to represent Carlow, learned of his presence in New York? Did they plan some surprise for him? But that was absurd!

Hildreth was not naturally a suspicious person; yet even the most unsuspecting person, having as weighty commissions to execute as had he, would be apt to consider any move before making it. Stage entrances are not exactly the proper thing for men engaged on weighty businesses.

But the note, if anything, was an appeal. And what possible harm could come to him from a walk round to the stage entrance of the Vandergelt? Suddenly he laughed. Arabin had spoken of a supper party. Perhaps he had meant a supper party with Miss Light as one of the guests! A very wealthy jeweler, with entrée to all sorts of society, might very well have a large stage acquaintance that included the charming Morn Light.

If that was the case —— But was it? Why did Miss Light want him to come now, instead of later? Why did she not mention Arabin's party? Why —— He looked again at the note. The handwriting made him think of the look of alarm in her eyes, the horror almost that he had seen in them; for the writing had been put into the envelope without blotting and was slightly blurred. Evidently Miss Light had been in a hurry. Moreover, the writing itself—strong, characterful—was proof in itself that it had been hastily written. Why the great haste if Arabin's party was the only motive for the writing of the note?

He laughed again, this time somewhat self-contemptuously. A little while before he had really been quite wrought up because he did not possess the inestimable privilege of an acquaintance with Morn Light, had found it necessary to restrain his inclination to go at once to her assistance. And now, when the loveliest girl he had ever seen, who radiated a personal charm more compelling than any he had ever hitherto experienced, wrote him a note asking him to come to her dressing room, he hesitated!

He suddenly blushed. How dare he offer the star of The Sunlight Girl the insult of a suspicious, hesitant thought? He carefully folded the note and placed it in the pocket of his dress coat. Impulse ruled him now. He was out in the entrance of the theater, holding his return check in his hand, before he quite realized that he was not wearing his overcoat.

But dozens of other men in evening dress were venturing into the cafés near the theater and these had not worn overcoats. The night was warm and starry. He asked a uniformed attaché of the theater where the stage entrance was. The attaché grinned wisely and directed him. Hildreth had visited stage doors before. A cousin, fairly well known on the musical-comedy stage in England, had on several occasions bade him call for her. So he knew enough to waste no time in parley with the doortender. He pressed a bill into that guardian's hand.

Up a narrow iron stairway Hildreth proceeded. On the first landing was room number one. Tremblingly, exulting, all mystery forgotten save that he was to see Morn Light, to talk with her, he knocked on the door.

It opened a few inches and a brown head, feminine, protruded. A pair of light eyes scrutinized.

"What do you want? Miss Light is resting."

"Why—why ——" stammered Hildreth. "I ——"

He got no farther. Another hand than the maid's pushed the door open. Morn Light stood before him, and even the close view of the make-up on her face could not lessen the influence of the natural beauty that was hers. She smiled.

"Why, hello, Ted! Come right in. Sweet of you to call!"

(Continued on Page 76)

The Girl Who Married New York

By CAMERON MACKENZIE

NORMA BUTLER'S story could be told in one concise scene setting forth all that occurred upon an evening in a certain New York cabaret—a place where the very air is at all times sick with voluptuousness, and the waiters not infrequently aid patrons to motors, the headlamps of which are beginning to pale against a new day. Much happened then, and there were volumes that night in the girl's clear, intelligent eyes when, after a second quart of champagne had been opened, she nodded assent to her husband's invitation to dance.

There were volumes more in her smile as his arms encircled her and she suffered herself to be guided about the clogged floor. But the things which happened to Norma were so many and various, she was cut at and assailed in such multitudinous ways, some of which were so insidious and brutal, that, to give her story its full values, much should be recounted which was only suggested upon the unlovely occasion that night.

Also, it is fairer to Norma to tell her story otherwise. Even if she was and, for that matter, is a splendid woman, she carried with her that evening her own indictments. There was one indictment in her very features: They were pulled and dark gray with fatigue; strain and other not pretty things were in them. Her little chatelaine bag, hidden beneath her idolatrous red wrap, held another; in it was a notice from her milliner that her husband's check had gone bad. Her husband himself, with his overred, moist lips, was a third; and besides, no one could have been so unhappy as she was then unless she herself had been, anyhow, somewhat at fault. And yet it is because she was, after all, so little at fault that her story should be told in full and from the beginning; and the beginning was when she was twenty.

At that time she was the perfect picture of young womanhood. Tall, almost statuesque, one could see in her luminous, eager eyes, in her serene countenance, all the hope and trust of her years. There was the fragrance of youth and wholesomeness about her. Unsoiled and unscarred, she was ready for her destiny, which then to all of Wellesville, and even to Norma herself, had seemed certain and clear. It was to marry in Wellesville, live in Wellesville, die in Wellesville; at the proper time she would

"They are Floaters Here, Just the Well-to-Do Riffraff"

pass on to children of her own the simple and dignified tradition of the spacious, well-lived-in house, with soothing green shutters and ample lawn, that stood at the corner where Merridew Avenue began. Everything seemed formulated and in readiness to that end; one more turn in the fortunes of Tom Fowler, just another client or two, and the thing was as good as done.

Norma's life would have been made with its lines finally and firmly cast along the pleasant, shaded streets where Butlers and Fowlers had for generations lived. But then along came Taylor King, with his snug-waisted, checked suits, his gay ties, his chamois gloves, and the grace and glitter of the great town a thousand miles away; and Norma, being young—which is her main excuse—bucked her destiny. That was when matters began.

At first Norma liked King exactly as she liked a score of other young men. There was nothing wrong with him; he had a cool, level eye; a detached, rather pleasing smile; and the general manner of a moderately prosperous individual, with good instincts and abilities. A bond salesman's job had brought him that time to Wellesville. After that he came to see Norma. She was entirely free to see him; the understanding with Fowler, if understanding there was, was tacit, a kind of silent growth. However, King challenged only her mildest emotions until, with the continuance of his courting, she realized that he made a life to be lived in New York a vivid, personal possibility for her. Then she was really stirred.

New York, at least a permanent existence there, had been to Norma exactly what it was to most other girls in Wellesville—one of the unattainable things of the world. So unlikely had it always seemed that she should ever dwell there, she had never much considered the idea. She conceived of the city as a brilliant, wondrous place where one saw all the new shows before the costumes were soiled, heard songs before they had become hurdy-gurdy tunes, viewed great pictures and met great people. Pleasures, she believed, stimulating to mind and soul and body were to be found at every hand. She had the memory of several weeks at different times passed there—weeks when, with her parents, she had lived in a vast hotel and had been swept through a delirious round of activities. Books, newspapers, talk, had contributed the rest of her conception. But such an existence and its fascination had seemed so far beyond her own set boundaries that her mind had not fairly grappled the thought. But with the advent of Taylor King it did.

Immediately her hot young imagination bounded in response and it was then that she let herself in for her great blunder.

Matters advanced rapidly. Norma's thinking got badly mixed. She confused Taylor King, the individual, with Taylor King, the resident of New York, and the man with the opportunity he seemed to embody. She contrasted her vision of the Metropolis with the drab, known reality of Wellesville, and began telling herself that life was too precious not to be richly lived. Meantime, while her mother pleaded and her father pleaded, and two or three of her friends cried, Norma's dream of the great city's life waxed more dazzling and colorful. At length it got the best of her; and, upon an evening when she knew that King was boarding a westward-bound train, she asked Tom Fowler to crawl through the hedge between their homes and sit with her upon the lawn.

He came—a big, fine, burly fellow, not a bit flashy, but tremendously real—and listened silently through that starlit evening while she told him what she had determined to do.

Norma cried that night; but with the morning, in a clear, cool corner of her brain, she reckoned over her chances again, and for the hundredth time it seemed to her that a brimming, vivacious, stimulating life—oh, an amazing life!—by no wild chance possible in Wellesville, was assured; and she was married to King in the fall.

Before the day when Norma King waved her jubilant good-by to Wellesville the vision of New York, which had dazzled her through the early stages of her courtship, had been reduced to a perfectly definite design. She did not imagine that she was going to conquer the great city overnight or become at her first smile a sought-after personage, but she had no difficulty in picturing herself, as Mrs. Taylor King, finding comfortable place in the gorgeous and animated town.

Taylor, of course, was the pivot of nearly everything; it was chiefly from the factors of his life that her new life was to be fashioned. Aside from Peter Henley and his wife, Marjory, Wellesville folk whom a giant corporation had uprooted and transplanted to New York, Norma could think of no friends there likely to prove contributory to her new world. But Taylor knew literally scores of persons. For a dozen years, since he was a boy of fifteen, in an Eastern school, in an Eastern college, in the city itself, he had been amassing a New York acquaintanceship. He himself was not New York born; his family, save for a widowed aunt, Sylvia Pringle, who was an old New Yorker, still lived west of the Alleghanies. But his tendrils seemed to spread in scores of directions in the metropolis and the girl was certain that she had only to choose. And she chose; she would identify herself with the Potter set.

This set, so far as Norma was able to discern, was New York's dashing and superb equivalent to the turgid social unit to which she herself had belonged and left behind in Wellesville. It was composed, apparently, of men and women of taste and breeding; they were gay after a decent and restrained manner; they gave chic little dances and charming little dinners; they patronized the opera and the very smartest shops. Their trim, bright motors crowded Fifth Avenue, and their homes were the dignified, unpretentious houses and sunshiny apartments of the upper East Side, within easy distance of Central Park.

"Not New York's most spectacular set, but New York's best set," her husband had told her self-approvingly.

King himself had come to terms of near intimacy with these people through his college friend, Harold Potter. For several years he had been eating their dinners, attending their dances, visiting their country places and calling their daughters by their first names. Mrs. Potter, Harold's mother, it appeared, was Taylor's especial friend and recognized arbiter of that coterie. It all seemed tremendously simple and clear; with the Potters and the Potters' friends she would find her chief New York affiliations.

Pessimistic Aunt Pringle

BUT there were other, though less important, factors in her preconceived notion of what her life was to be. Among these was Paul Scudder—who worked with Taylor in Norris Brothers', the bankers—and his young wife.

"Just the people for little parties round town," had explained Taylor. "Potter and his crowd don't go much. But Paul and his wife are all for a little of that kind of fun."

And Norma had visions of delectable little dinners in restaurants; of diverting theater parties; of cheerful suppers, interspersed with dancing. Also, there were those old Wellesville friends, the Henleys; and finally Taylor's aunt, Mrs. Pringle, who, although she did not seem to hold much promise, was still not to be entirely overlooked. So far as Norma could make out, she was merely a lonely old woman living on a meager income. She probably would count little in realizing the bright possibilities of the town.

But it was Sylvia Pringle who came to see Norma first after the young couple had arrived.

They were temporarily installed in a hotel. All that day the girl had been in ecstasies of youthful delight. As the heavy-rolling train had neared New York she had kept repeating to herself: "Oh, it's going to be too wonderful—too wonderful!" At which private observation each time she had surreptitiously and affectionately squeezed her husband's hand and felt miserably sorry for several girls, marooned, no doubt forever, in Wellesville. When the train arrived her heart had bounded at the thought that at last the new superexistence was really to begin. She was entranced, enthralled, perfectly certain of herself, of her love and her chosen destiny. With a knock on the door, Mrs. Pringle walked in.

It Was a Huge Place. There Was Nothing Dainty or Fine in the Scene

Taylor's aunt was a bright-eyed, tight-lipped little person who turned and re-turned her black silks, and was not above darning her gloves. For forty years she had lived in New York; she knew the place through and through; and in those years during which Norma King encountered the city, Sylvia Pringle played a not unimportant though often unwelcome rôle. She was forever throwing off quantities of the most sour observations, the mass of which began upon that particular day, upon the occasion of her first call.

For a moment or two she had been looking Norma up and down, evidently with a thoroughly approving eye.

"So you've come to tackle New York, eh?" she said in a hard, thin voice.

Norma acknowledged that she had.

"What did you do that for? No one lives here who can help it—at least no one who has an atom of knowledge about the place. It's a beastly town!"

"A beastly town!" repeated Norma with an indulgent smile. "Oh, no, Mrs. Pringle; don't tell me that!"

"It is, though. You don't realize something about New York."

"What?"

"How infernally big it is."

"Oh, yes, I do. That's why I love it so."

Mrs. Pringle, with remote sadness, shook her head.

"Well, I hope it doesn't eat you up. It does that to people, you know."

The girl took passing note of the tired shoulders, the sallow cheeks, the lonely eyes. But Norma's spirit was very exultant just then.

"Oh, it won't, auntie! I'm sure Taylor and I can get along," she laughed.

"What makes you think so?"

"Well," began Norma hesitatingly, "Taylor's made no end of friends, and between us we've rather a decent income—not a lot, but enough, I'm sure—and, oh, I don't know, I've always been able to get along.""

"In Wellesville—certainly. And out there, with what you two've got, you'd be the luckiest young people in the place. But this is New York; it's another place, another creed, another game. I know! I know!"

Norma humored the old lady through the rest of the call. The girl was so certain of her resources, so sure of a foothold in the marvelous life of the marvelous town, that she thought precious little about the talk, even before her husband's return from his office downtown. Then the matter went completely from her mind. Taylor had lost no time; he had fetched Harold Potter to see her; it had been arranged that they should dine with the Scudders.

The visit of Harold Potter was brief. He proved an amusing, affable person, and he went away leaving Norma with a sense that he had been more than glad to see her. That was how she had expected she would be made to feel, and very blithely she set about getting into her evening gown for the dinner that was ahead.

"The Scudders," her husband explained as they dressed, "always entertain in restaurants. They've a small flat. So we're to meet at Connively's at seven-thirty. Theater and supper afterward, you know. You'll have a real party. The Scudders are great!"

In her first impression, when Norma met the Scudders in the great, onyx-vaulted corridor of the hotel, she was not disappointed. Paul Scudder was a short, obese young man with a round, red, jovial face, and Dolly Scudder a sparkling person with dimples. It did strike her that there was a hint of grossness beneath Scudder's eyes, and she wished that Mrs. Scudder had worn a gown which did not threaten at every moment to slip away from her gleaming, olive-tinted shoulders. But they were a well-mannered, thoroughly presentable couple, and very nearly in keeping with her prevision of them as pleasant young married folk who got the most out of the decent and best side of smart, gay New York.

As they were bowed into the softly lighted, tapestried dining room, the girl had no doubt that she was going to be glad of the Scudders as friends. During dinner the Scudders made it apparent that they were only too glad to have the Kings as friends. All was quite as merry and diverting as Norma could have wished. After the theater, when they reached a cabaret and were seated at a table, Mrs. Scudder, turning to the girl, said:

"You know it's so difficult to find nice people like you to go round with. Neither Paul nor I've managed to make many friends here, and it's so boring always to go out by ourselves.

"It's much more interesting if you can find friends, don't you think? I'm so glad we've found you."

Home as a Last Resort

NORMA was glad that Mrs. Scudder was glad, but in a mild way she was surprised that Mrs. Scudder should be in need of friends; she had gathered, during the course of the evening, that they had been in New York for some time. However, by way of an answer the girl only observed:

"Don't you two ever stay home?"

"Oh, yes, once in a while," returned the other; "but not if we can help it. These New York apartments, unless you pay a frightful rental, are so small and dingy. It's impossible to dance in them; and, anyway, it's so much more amusing to go round town."

The idea of a life led in restaurants and cabarets impressed Norma as queer, and before they all parted at a quarter of one she had wished that Paul Scudder had spared himself a drink or two. But all this seemed then of small consequence; and, although she could not altogether make out the Scudders, it was of the Potters, and most particularly of that formidable dowager, Mrs. Potter, that she was thinking as she went to bed.

It was a subject for only passing thought that Mrs. Potter did not call the next day or the next. The girl was busy, and the bustle and activity of the town excited her. Indeed, it was a week before she brought herself up short

Sparkling Glasses, Silver Dishes, Gleaming Linen—All Breathed Ease and the Spirit of Freedom From Care

with the realization that her prospective social sponsor had given neither word nor sign of any sort.

"Wait! Wait!" adjured Taylor. "Mrs. Potter's a great friend of mine. I've dined at her table fifty times. She'll call soon. Then you'll be asked to the house."

Norma was satisfied. Another week passed, during which they rented an apartment conveniently within the Potter radius; but not a flicker, not a note, not a telephone call from Mrs. Potter, or, for that matter, from any of the other matrons of the Potter group. And then Norma had her first real twinge in her encounter with New York. She was a little uneasy and greatly perplexed. She had not expected to be stampeded upon her very arrival by these friends of Taylor's, but she had not imagined that she would be left so severely alone.

In Wellesville she knew what the procedure would have been in even slightly similar circumstances. Word of the arrival of such a thoroughly desirable and accredited young couple would have spread within twenty-four hours. Her mother, her mother's friends, the entire Merridew Avenue connection, actuated by various motives, would have descended upon them. Some would have come out of curiosity concerning persons who were going to be in their midst; some out of unalloyed kindness; others from self-interest, perhaps, to win early the friendship of folk whom henceforth they would continually meet. But they would have come—that was the point; and within seven days the newly arrived pair would have been invited to as many different houses to dine, and before then, no doubt, have been carried from their hotel and made guests in some home. The seeming indifference of the Potters and of all the Potter following fitted oddly and uncomfortably with her social experience.

Lonely Days in a Lonely Flat

THIS was her initial experience with a kind of perplexity, or maybe it was bewilderment, which Norma confronted for months after her descent upon New York. Coupled with it at many times there were dismay, anxiety, other emotions, but at all times an annoying inability to understand the behavior of others. She often told herself that if she could only understand she might be able to excuse; but the incomprehensible was repeatedly cropping up. Taylor was of little help, and it was no long while before the girl realized that, despite his years of residence in the city, huge volumes had remained closed to him. His perplexed anxiety was often as great as hers when, after some riddle had presented itself which neither of them was able to solve, Norma would make shift by fabricating explanations for herself which, even as she formulated them, she only half believed.

For example, to assuage her uneasiness over the neglect of her by Mrs. Potter and all the rest of Taylor's friends, she tried to conclude that no one had come to see her because she and her husband were still living in a hotel. In Wellesville that would have been an added reason for calling early and rushing to the rescue. But maybe, she told herself, things did not work that way in New York.

This served her for a time, but not for long, because within six weeks they had quitted their hotel, the last picture had been hung in the apartment living room, and for two weeks Norma had been sitting in her chintz-covered chair waiting for Mrs. Potter's ring. She waited another two weeks. Not only did the vastly important Mrs. Potter fail to call, but all other of her husband's much-vaunted friends were equally remote. She did not believe that Taylor had misrepresented to her the extent of his intimacy with this group; had she ever held such a suspicion, Harold Potter's manner, even upon the occasion of his brief call at the hotel, would have disposed of it. It was something else—some mysterious something else. "Bigness!" Mrs. Pringle told her grimly; but that cryptic utterance did not help.

Finally a day came when the girl, reckoning back, astounded herself with the fact that she had been ten full weeks in New York. During that time, for all evidences of Norma's senses, Mrs. Potter might have been a purely imaginary figure; not even a card, nothing, just flawless neglect. The record of the other matrons was as impregnable. The thing was far more than disconcerting. Think of it! She had planned and builded a scheme of social existence largely dependent upon one group of persons, and then every last one of the group had turned out, for all practical purposes, a myth! But, harsh as this was, it got less of her thought than the mere mystery of it. Weeks previously the girl had become convinced that there was some intangible, monstrous cause for her total isolation.

Her mystification was not lessened by the fact that Harold Potter came and went, and with the utmost serenity. Norma never once detected in him a moment's embarrassment or restraint; it was as if the thought had never entered his head that his mother might call or bid them to her home. He never even suggested that his sister might accompany Norma some afternoon to a matinée. The girl was several times on the point of putting it squarely up to Harold to tell her why his entire world had seemed to have conspired to leave her alone. But there was a small ultimate quality in Harold Potter that would have forbidden such a question, even if there had not been a small ultimate quality in Norma that would have forbidden her asking it.

So she pondered and pondered. In her loneliness she became morbid. She began to be possessed of a feeling that there were gigantic forces at work which she could not see or touch or even attempt to analyze; and that in the very air of the city there were currents moving with an insidious gentleness to make people's lives. Against these currents she felt herself powerless and weak. The sensation was new. In Wellesville there had been a simplicity and clarity in existence that had given her confidence in her mastery over her own destiny. The thought that her own fate had been snatched from her own hands was not reassuring—it was dreadful.

"Bigness—the spirit of bigness!" as Mrs. Pringle had explained, did not seem to answer the question of why Mrs. Potter did not come and permit Norma to begin the life she had foreseen.

After a time the girl was asking herself if there was anything weird or unusual about her or her appearance—some odd, repelling defect of which she had never been conscious. Or had Harold Potter reported that she was a frump? Maybe some secret stain had come recently upon Taylor's name. Wilder and wilder grew her guesses. In her whole existence such treatment was unheard of; it was as heart-rending as it was inexplicable. And then finally, on an afternoon when Norma was trembling upon the verge of violent tears, Mrs. Potter did call. That was three months after the young bride had arrived in New York!

Nothing, apparently, could have been more removed from Mrs. Potter's mind than that it might be gracious to offer at least a half explanation. But by chance, and in another connection, she gave Norma the clew. It was nothing more nor less than that she had been busy. Whirling through a round of glittering activities, she had been too occupied, too engrossed, too strung up to a nervous concentration, for an act of the most simple kindness and politeness—an act that would have saved the girl many tasteless, disheartened hours. The city had swallowed up Mrs. Potter and, in so doing, had struck its first blow at Norma.

Even when Mrs. Potter did come, the girl had no sense of warmth; and she craved a little warmth just then. It was as if that prodigious lady had by a supreme effort crowded the breathless visit into her afternoon.

"Charming to see you!" she said as she took her prompt leave. "Good-by! I've no end of things ahead of me which must be done."

And she departed, leaving Norma to hope that some day the giant town would sweep her up into its arms like that. If it did, she vowed, she would not let some miserable girl sit for months in an unbroken solitude, waiting for the doorbell to ring.

"Don't be too hard on her," cautioned Sylvia Pringle. "In a place as big as New York there are a million necessary and inviting things to do. There are calls to make, shopping to do, dinners to rest up for, balls to rest up from. The tide of the city's life runs very strong—strong, in keeping with the city's size—and it's hard for anyone in the full flood of it to pull aside, even to be decent to a girl like you. That's New York!"

Dinner With the Potters

"ALL of which," observed the girl, "seemed so natural, so inevitable, that Harold Potter never had a moment's thought or apology for his mother's neglect. Everybody is supposed to reckon on the fact that New York keeps everybody else engrossed, and not to expect the most ordinary small courtesies—at least what Wellesville regards as ordinary courtesies."

Following Mrs. Potter's call, others came.

"Why, I only heard that you'd arrived the other day," one would explain; "my husband happened to catch a glimpse of Taylor running for the Subway." Or, from another: "Don't tell me that you've been here four months! Why, by the merest accident Harold Potter mentioned you the other day."

With an ironic smile it came to Norma by what freak and slender chances her utter unhappiness and despair had been lifted. A glimpse of Taylor running for the Subway! An idle word from Harold Potter!

"Well, never mind!" declared Norma, a little pallid after her months of tragic isolation, to Mrs. Pringle. "It's past now. I see some things about the bigness of New York. But I've got the best of that, and from now on its bigness will be the finest thing about the place. It's going to give me heaps to do."

"If it doesn't give everyone else more to do," observed Aunt Sylvia grimly, as she took her way.

But Norma laughed; an invitation to dine at the Potters' had just arrived, and she felt herself finally upon the uppermost, gayest crest of the wave. New York was an all-right place after all!

Norma and Taylor presented themselves before Mrs. Potter at precisely the correct tick of the hour. Before they had sat down to dinner a large company had assembled. Twenty or more guests were there, a few of whom the girl had already met. Scarcely had they found their places at the table when the man on her right, spreading his napkin, leaned forward and, speaking to a woman opposite, asked:

"Well, Fanny, how's Jimmy's game?"

Paradoxically that simple offhand question and the manner in which it had been put gave Norma instantaneous confidence in her future. Her neighbor's words had been uttered in the easy familiarity of close friendship and conveyed an immediate sense of mountains of common knowledge and common interest between the two. The girl had not the most remote idea who Jimmy was or what his game might be, but at the moment Norma could have closed her eyes and readily imagined herself in any of a score of houses along Merridew Avenue at home. She was certain that she had found just what she had expected and hoped to find; here, indeed, was New York's bright

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The Greatest Speech in History

By EDWIN LEFÈVRE

ILLUSTRATED BY WILL FOSTER

THE business men who formed the board of directors of the Totuma Valley Land and Development Company were reckoned among the shrewdest in Apachia. Nevertheless, Watson B. Webb, the promoter, not only sold them one hundred and sixty-four thousand acres of desert land but induced them to build miles and miles of irrigation ditches. Then that same Webb made a contract with them to sell that same land to Northern farmers at something like seven thousand per cent profit, on a fifty-fifty commission basis.

Before the directors of the Totuma Valley Land and Development Company knew it, the awful Webb had sold nearly fifty thousand acres on the installment plan. On paper the company stood to make as many hundreds of thousands of dollars as there were stockholders. Webb collected all the cash he could on what was due him on commissions and went away to Europe to sell life insurance to the Czar of Russia.

The directors of the land company discovered that they had obligated themselves to supply the purchasers of land with water for irrigation purposes; but the engineers reported that there was no place on the company's property where a reservoir could be built which would hold water, owing to the nature of the soil. The directors blamed Webb for inducing them to take a short cut to dividends by building the ditches before the dam was finished. They wrote to him about it and received this telegram in reply:

Get the water at all costs. Otherwise expect suits from buyers of your land and from *me* for commissions due.

Fortunately the company's engineers also reported that the waters of the Totuma River might be impounded at Pajaritos, on the Government reservation. Indeed, years before, engineers of the United States Reclamation Service had reported favorably on a project to build a great dam at Pajaritos; but nothing had come of it, because there was nobody to push it. The distressed Apachians, spurred by the threats of suits, welcomed the hope of succor at the hands of a Paternal Government. Being Apachia business men, they naturally thought of the honorable Stanford Ray, senior senator from their state.

Col. W. A. Croffut, president of the Totuma Valley Land and Development Company, went to Washington, District of Columbia, on the midnight train. He carried with him a valise containing one change of underwear, one shirt, one collar, one draft payable to himself on Biggs Bank, one card of introduction to Senator Ray from P. Harrison Smith, political boss of the city of Hopia, and one bill, drawn by the company's attorneys, authorizing the building of a dam at Pajaritos.

The Colonel, a tall, stout, florid-faced man, was shooed out of the sleeping car at seven A. M. It was too early to call on Senator Ray; so Croffut went to the most expensive hotel, took his bath, shaved, had a leisurely breakfast, and then sat in a big arm-chair in the onyx-columned lobby. He smoked a particularly fine cigar and amused himself by looking at the growing crowd a crowd that no other city in the Union could collect. He saw high-cheekboned crackers from Georgia; blue-eyed vikings from Scandinavian Minnesota; coppery halfbreeds from Oklahoma; down-easterners who, without opening their mouths, facially informed the Colonel that when they did speak it certainly would be through their noses.

There was about most of them a curious air of self-consciousness, as of men accustomed to speaking in public on "occasions"; also, a look of uneasiness, as of having been caught at something silly rather than ignoble. This came from each man's belief that everybody must know what office he came to Washington to get—one that was big and mouth-filling at home, but insignificant here and, moreover, not a certainty—by no means a certainty!

Presently the Colonel saw men come from the street into the hotel and look about them with a sort of apprehensive determination; much the same expression that you see on men who walk into a dentist's office. He saw them deferentially buttonholed by men with pleading faces. And after a while the newcomers would cease to look frightened and would swell up and nod portentously as they listened—congressmen suspected by misguided office seekers of being personages; of knowing exactly which wire to yank; of having irresistible pull.

Pull! That was it. That was what drew thither all these men with anxious faces. It made the Colonel think of his own errand. It was now ten o'clock and he telephoned to Senator Ray's office at the Capitol.

"This is Colonel Croffut. I am the president of the Totuma Valley Land and Development Company; and ——"

The Senator's private secretary answered:

"Yes, sir."

"I am, strictly speaking, from Hopia."

"Ah, yes?" The tone invited confidence, even over the telephone.

"I have a card from P. Harrison Smith for the Senator."

"One moment, please." There was a pause. The Colonel couldn't hear what went on at the other end, because the secretary had carefully placed his hand over the transmitter. Then: "The Senator is very busy just now with a previous engagement, but he will be glad to see you later in the day."

"Where and at what time?"

"In his committee room—Senate wing of the Capitol."

Pull! That Was It. That Was What Drew Thither All These Men With Anxious Faces

"Very well. The name is Col. W. A. Croffut—C-r-o——"

"The Senator will be delighted to see you," impolitely cut in the secretary.

"I'll be there at one," said the Colonel vindictively.

He kept his word.

Stanford Ray, senior senator from Apachia, made it the object of his political life to avoid visible extremes. He was neither old nor young; neither thin nor fat; neither tall nor short. His hair was rapidly thinning, but his mustache was heavy and, as the seed catalogues say, a vigorous grower. He dressed well, but without foppishness. His mind worked like lightning, but he intelligently concealed it by talking very slowly. His voice naturally was rather weak, but he conveyed an impression of sturdy vocal powers by precise enunciation and a meticulous selection of words.

His physical inconspicuousness was so obviously an achievement that it gave him a high standing among the intellectuals of the Senate. He baffled alike those who sought to classify him as a great man and those who would see in him a great humbug. He could, with equal aptitude, express his desires or conceal his intentions, and at the same time neither lie nor tell the truth. It was, therefore, not what he said that perplexed the unfriendly character analysts, but always what they thought he must think.

"Senator Ray," said James Lorgan, the private secretary, with the gravity of an undertaker addicted to elocution, "this is Colonel Croffut, of Hopia."

"I am truly glad to see you, sir!"

The cordial words fell from the Senator's lips with the cold absence of emphasis of a metronome.

"I wanted very much to see you, Senator."

"I thank you, Colonel Croffut. You give me great pleasure. I consider it a privilege to be of service to any Hopian—or, indeed, to any fellow citizen from whatever town, state or territory he may hail, or whatever political beliefs he may hold. To me it is enough that he is an American!"

The Senator delivered this speech with the same machinelike effect. Colonel Croffut had a vision of Edison inventing the Senator's throat, and all but looked to see if alongside the Adam's apple there was not stamped "Patent applied for." But the Honorable Stanford Ray always had a reason for everything he did, said or looked. The reason for the mechanical voice and nonemphasized speech was to afford a striking contrast to the amiable shadings of the same voice—after he knew!

And the reason for so drawlingly uttering so many unnecessary words was that James Lorgan, private secretary, had just placed a telegram face up on the desk, which the Senator read out of the corner of his eye while even he was mechanically speaking to Colonel Croffut. Having finished reading it, the Senator placed two fingers of his left hand on the edge of his desk. This meant No! Whereupon young Mr. Lorgan—smooth-faced, Irish-faced, American-eyed—took up the telegram, marked it with two perpendicular pencil strokes to show what answer should be returned, and disappeared.

"I have a card from P. Harrison Smith," said Colonel Croffut.

"Indeed!" The Senator, not having seen the card, still spoke enthusiastically. "He is a very old and loyal friend, and his friends are always welcome in this office."

You never would have suspected the welcome from the chill monotony of the words or the comatose phrase-cadence.

The Senator's vocal eccentricity very properly began to irritate Col. W. A. Croffut. Mr. P. Harrison Smith had demanded and received one thousand dollars as his fee for his utterly unnecessary approval of the bill, prepared by the company's attorneys, authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to build the vitally needed Pajaritos Dam. Mr. P. Harrison Smith,

however, had added to his superfluous legal advice a very necessary card of introduction.

"Here is the card."

The Colonel spoke shortly; it would be only a matter of seconds now before he learned whether or not the company had been cheated out of a thousand dollars.

The Senator extended his hand woodenly and took the card that Colonel Croffut held out to him. He read it as carefully as if it were a confidential report from his stockbrokers:

MR. P. HARRISON SMITH

Suite 888 LAWYERS' TRUST BUILDING

On the back of the card were the words: Introducing Col. W. A. Croffut; but it did not say to whom the introduction was. Also, there were two small blots on the left-hand corner of the card that looked like an accident resulting from an overfull pen. They had been made most carefully with a dropper and signified that the bearer was probably good for two figures in stock. That was why the ink was black. Purple ink meant political influence; or, at least, that was what a newspaper correspondent who had read Sherlock Holmes always asserted.

"Mr. Smith suggested, Senator," began Colonel Croffut doubtfully, "that we ——"

"Yes, yes! Where's the bill?" interrupted the Senator with an amiable briskness that strikingly contrasted with his previous coldness.

Colonel Croffut, surprised a little and relieved a great deal, silently handed it to the Senator, who read it through very carefully but very quickly. He was an expert in devising "jokers," and for that reason could spot them in others' bills unerringly—to his great advantage.

"I wish," said the Senator regretfully as he finished reading the bill, "that you had brought it to me earlier."

"Oh," the Colonel sighed resignedly; "then it is ——"

"It will be much harder to push it through."

The Senator had used up his stock of vote-swapping *quid pro quos;* but he always kept up his sleeve a card or two in reserve for supreme efforts when favors were desired in the name of justice by certain of his constituents. He was thinking of which card to play. It would depend on his visitor.

Colonel Croffut, thinking of his wrongs, which consisted of the justifiable threats of criminal suits by the purchasers of the company's unirrigated lands, looked the Senator straight in the eye and said, with the impressiveness of a philanthropist in the act of saving ten thousand lives in public:

"This Pajaritos Dam project has been advocated for years by the Government engineers of the Reclamation Service and, on the suggestion of the Secretary of the Interior, recommended by the President of the United States in his message to the Eighty-sixth Congress."

The Senator seemed not to have heard a word. He was looking thoughtfully at the ceiling. Presently he said musingly:

"You need the Pajaritos Dam pretty badly?"

The Colonel winced at having to tell the truth. He saw his admission capitalized by the statesman; but, with what might be called intelligent candor, he answered:

"Yes, we do."

The Senator nodded, with an effect of corroborating the Colonel's answer, and pursued:

"Yes, indeed. My son Robert is very much interested in irrigation matters. It is one of his hobbies. He contends that irrigation, and only irrigation, can reduce the high cost of living by increasing the agricultural output."

The Senator paused and stared reflectively at the Colonel.

"I am sure he is right," politely acquiesced Croffut.

The Honorable Stanford Ray smiled gratefully on his caller, pushed a bell button on his desk, and said to his secretary, who appeared at the threshold:

"Mr. Lorgan, I wish you would get me one of my son Robert's cards."

He turned to Colonel Croffut and explained:

"His office is in Hopia. I should like you to call on him and exchange views on irrigation. And it is possible"—here he smiled benevolently—"that he may wish to invest in your company."

The Colonel did not say that, since the Totuma Valley Land and Development Company was not overcapitalized, none of the fourteen stockholders desired to part with the unwatered stock. It was the land that they wished to water; and if the Government built the dam the settlers would pay for that. The only theory tenable was that Robert Ray must be the receiving teller. Therefore the Colonel promised earnestly:

"I'll see him on my return, Senator. Now about this bill ——"

"It looks to me as though it were a desirable measure. If after careful study I find it as I now think, I shall give the project my entire attention. That means, of course, my warm support."

For some reason or other the last two words conveyed to Colonel Croffut a suggestion of high prices, which naturally irritated him. It is always an exasperation to bribe men, as it were, in the dark; which happens when you deal with people who if they take bribes at all do so in disguise—or else by proxy. Why didn't this man name his price or proclaim his honesty? But the Colonel controlled himself and said:

"So far as I am concerned, Senator, that assurance is quite enough; but the directors of our company would be glad to get what—er—we might call—er—more definite ——"

"Tell them that you left the matter in good hands," modestly interrupted the Senator.

"Of course I'll do that. Yes, sir. But you know, Senator, they might not like ——"

"If they don't like that," interrupted the Honorable Stanford Ray in an even, emotionless voice, "then tell them to go to hell!"

Colonel Croffut flushed deeply and was about to permit himself the luxury of an angry retort, feeling that the Honorable S. Ray must be too honest to do business with, when the Senator held up his hand with a refined sort of traffic policeman's gesture, and said, loudly enough to be heard in the anteroom: "Mr. Lorgan, Colonel Croffut is waiting for the card." He finished calmly: "You may get valuable hints from him, Colonel."

A newspaper correspondent poked his head in at the door. The Senator rose and said loudly to the Colonel:

"I am glad you called in, Doctor. Drop in any time you happen to be in Washington. I'll never be too busy to see you. I am sorry you must go back this afternoon. Give my regards to our old friend when you see him again. Tell him you saw me in good health, but busy, as usual."

He escorted Colonel Croffut to the door, shook hands with him in plain sight of the correspondent, turned him over to Mr. Lorgan with an affectionate wave of the hand, and smiled reminiscently as he turned to go back to his desk—just as though he remembered a funny story told by the man who had paid a purely personal call on a busy statesman. It was all unnecessary, but it had become a habit.

The Colonel returned to Hopia that same afternoon. On the next day, before going to the office of the Totuma Valley Land and Development Company, he called on Robert Ray to discuss the general subject of irrigation.

Young Mr. Ray listened intelligently to the Colonel's introduction of himself—that is, his eyes had a cold, shrewd look that intensely displeased Colonel Croffut. This feeling of hostility was not helped by young Mr. Ray's questions, a little later, into the extent of the company's land holdings, the sales to date, the capitalization, the character of the contracts they had given to purchasers of land, and so on. At the end he shook his head and said crossly:

"It is too bad I didn't hear about your troubles earlier. As it is now, with Congress almost ready to adjourn, and the publication in the newspapers about the threats of suits against your company—well, it's a bad mess."

"Mr. Ray"—and the Colonel looked Robert Ray straight in the eyes—"I never give up hope."

He meant he was willing to pay.

"No; you can't afford to until you have made every sacrifice to pull yourself out of the hole. Now, though the stock may stand you in eighty dollars a share, you know as well as I do that it isn't worth eighty cents. However, I think I might get some people to give you twenty dollars."

"We have none for sale," said the Colonel. "We are willing to pay—er—for—er—legal services in connection with the dam project; and ——"

"You don't need a lawyer to enable settlers on your land to buy water from the Government. You sold these poor men land that you guaranteed to be not only irrigable but certain to be irrigated within a few months. Not only are you liable for what money has been paid to you but for damages. Twenty-five hundred shares at twenty dollars. See the directors. Then come and see me to-morrow."

Colonel Croffut saw the directors that same afternoon and told them what had happened at his interviews with the two Rays. The directors permitted themselves the expression of some utterly valueless opinions of the Honorable Stanford Ray, his statesmanship, his son, and his son's demands; but, of course, in the end, they agreed to let Robert Ray have the twenty-five hundred shares of stock at twenty dollars a share.

"Drop In Any Time You Happen to be in Washington. I'll Never be Too Busy to See You"

The facts that without Senator Ray's help they could not get Government aid, and that without Government aid that selfsame stock would not be worth twenty cents, did not dilute their indignation. Neither did they philosophize about their own desire to get something for nothing; but all of them thought it would be just as well if they did not display too much eagerness in meeting young Mr. Ray's terms. Four days were allowed to pass before Colonel Croffut called at Robert Ray's office.

The office boy said that Mr. Ray was busy. The Colonel volunteered the information that he would wait. He did; and filled himself with fury—not so much at waiting, but because sounds of laughter came frequently from the private office. Just when the Colonel had made up his mind to speak very plainly to Robert Ray, the office boy informed him that Mr. Ray would see him.

The indignant Colonel walked into the private office, frowning. Young Mr. Ray, sitting at his desk, made no motion to rise or to shake hands. As if the Colonel were an utter stranger he asked:

"What can I do for you, sir?"

"I am Colonel Croffut, of the Totuma Valley ——"

"Yes, yes; I know. What can I do for you?"

"I came to tell you that we will sell you the twenty-five hundred shares of stock ——"

"What stock?" interrupted Robert Ray sharply.

"Wh-why," sputtered the astonished Croffut, "the twenty-five hundred shares of Totuma Valley Land and Development Company."

"Oh, yes!" ejaculated Robert Ray. "I remember now. Well, that deal is off."

The Colonel was paralyzed. He forgot his anger and even his grievance over his long wait in the outer office.

"I don't quite understand you," he began.

"You came here to sell me stock that depended for its value on certain action. Then, knowing that every second of time was precious, you wait three days. No use! It's all off."

"Have you heard from your father?"

"Why in blazes should I hear from my father? Do you think I own him? Is he your hired man? He was waiting to hear from me, but I couldn't tell him anything. I withdraw my offer. Excuse me," he finished, rising. "I am rather busy."

Colonel Croffut realized the exact meaning of the phrase, "justifiable homicide." He also saw thousands of his dollars vanish. This made him magnanimous and he said placatingly to the young man:

"Well, now, Mr. Ray, I think ——"

But Mr. Ray cut him short and said sternly:

"People who come to me to ask me to invest in their enterprises do all their thinking before they come to this office. I told you to come back three days ago. You didn't. The delay has complicated matters greatly. My advice to you is to accept the offer."

"Certainly," said Colonel Croffut eagerly. He took some stock certificates from his inside pocket. "We are willing to do so. I brought here the twenty-five hundred shares ——"

He stopped short because Mr. Ray's right hand was waving away the certificates as though they had been stolen from a bubonic-plague corpse. This made the Colonel forget that he had been vehemently instructed to ask for a strictly cash payment from R. Ray.

"No, no!" exclaimed Robert Ray angrily. "No, no! It's the new offer that I mean. You agree to give an option on five thousand shares of your stock to Herman T. Schrader, at five dollars a share."

Colonel Croffut turned a brick red.

"I must say ——" he began thickly.

"I'd rather you would not express any opinions in this office. You heard Schrader's offer. If you can't or won't take it, say nothing. This is a free country. Your stock is yours. My money is mine. It is now 11:17 A. M. If at four o'clock to-day I have not heard from you I shall take it to mean that you have decided that nothing should be done with the Pajaritos Dam this year, or"—he finished softly—"ever!"

"I—I—I ——" sputtered the Colonel.

"Knowing you to be a busy man," continued Robert Ray pleasantly, "I had the document prepared for you. Here it is." And he picked up from his desk a paper, which he extended to Colonel Croffut. "A sixty-day option on five thousand shares, at five dollars a share, to Herman T. Schrader."

Colonel Croffut frowned fiercely, but took the labor-saving document.

"I'll have to speak with the directors about this," he said sternly; "but I'll tell you frankly, Mr. Ray, that I think ——"

"I wouldn't dream of thinking aloud in this office if I were you, Colonel Croffut," interjected Robert Ray coldly. "Every time you do so it makes me fear that nothing will be done. Before four o'clock to-day, please."

The office boy, obeying a preconcerted signal, here came in and said:

"Mr. Ray, you're wanted on the long-distance."

"Excuse me, sir," said Robert Ray, and walked toward an absolutely soundproof telephone booth in a corner of his private office.

Colonel Croffut left the room. He also left unsaid sundry things he wished to say. He called a meeting of the directors and explained the situation. One of his colleagues said loudly:

"This is an infernal outrage! It seems to me that if this business had been properly handled ——"

Colonel Croffut jumped to his feet, his face purple, and shook his fist at his fellow director.

"I had to swallow my feelings before that blankety-blank crook," shouted the Colonel, "but I won't stand a damn word from anybody in this room! You've heard what he wants. Take it or leave it! I'll go in or stay out with the rest; but I won't take any insults from ——"

"Keep cool, Bill," came from a director who was a municipal contractor. "I know what you're up against. Gentlemen, give young Mr. Ray what he asks. It's the only thing we can do."

Before three o'clock that day Robert Ray had the option in his safe.

Nothing happened. A week passed. Still no word from a Paternal Government. Colonel Croffut called on young Mr. Ray to ascertain whether the givers of the option were getting a run for their money, and was smilingly informed that things were going as well as could be expected.

"You know I am as much interested in the success of the company as if I were a stockholder in it. We have a very difficult job before us, but I think we'll pull it through. If we don't you, at least, won't lose any money through my advice—which is to be patient."

Colonel Croffut had to be content with this, not knowing Mr. Herman T. Schrader was as busy as a bee in Pajaritos

Ninety-Three Senators Followed His Motions Fascinatedly

at that very moment securing options on all the lands that would be benefited by the dam. The owners thereof—optimists who had been induced years before to buy in expectations of the building of the Government's dam—had lost all hope and were willing to sell for a song. A gladsome song at that; for the thought of sticking an Eastern dude is a pleasure than which earth knows no greater.

Senator Ray was not sorry that circumstances had compelled him to leave the bill for the last. It is often wise to do this with important legislation. When only three days remain, and something like forty-two hundred bills, party measures and epoch-making laws are to be rushed through a dying session, astute statesmen sometimes succeed in getting the requisite votes by judicious swapping with other statesmen whose necessities—indeed, whose very political life—may depend on getting forty-nine yeas. Hardy perennials—bills which are introduced by inveterate optimists at every session as infallibly as the advent of spring—slumber in committee. At the end of the session, when the scramble is more desperate, brother legislators are more amenable to reason and fair swaps.

On the last day of March, when only five days of life remained to the Congress, the Honorable Stanford Ray, senior senator from Apachia, was in his seat, front row, on the left of the Vice-President's rostrum. It was 11:57 A.M. The session had not begun. It was unusual for Senator Ray to be on the floor so early, for he was one of those modern statesmen who hustle incessantly but untheatrically, and whose most effective oratory, in a conversational tone of voice, is delivered in their committee rooms.

At noon the presiding officer, the Vice-President of the United States, unspitefully thumped the block before him with the gavel. The murmurous hum of conversation ceased abruptly. A Sunday silence descended on the Senate Chamber. Sunday looks fastened themselves on the countenances of the Conscript Fathers as they rose in their places. From the galleries the misinformed spectators, endeavoring to see the legislative wheels go round, saw, instead, a series of horseshoe curves of mahogany desks and seats. Before each front-row desk stood a page, clean-faced, Eton-collared, head bowed reverently. The chaplain prayed. The listening senators inclined their heads.

As soon as the prayer was over business began. The senators sent up batches of bills—measures in which they were interested, or which crank constituents wished introduced. It costs nothing to "introduce" such bills, which range from bills for pensions to bills for the abolition of all kinds of abuses—political, commercial, financial, social, criminal, or even real.

Among the day's bills was Senate Bill Number X Y Z, introduced by Senator Ray, authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to build at once a dam at Pajaritos, on the Totuma River. The preliminary expenses were to be met from the regular appropriation for reclamation purposes, even though some other project had to be temporarily abandoned. The amount involved was seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Of course, before the dam was finished the Government would have spent twice as much.

The party leaders, harassed by the short time remaining to them and the million things still to be done, sought Senator Ray and profanely inquired into the meaning of the ruthless attack on the National Treasury.

"It will enable," explained Senator Ray sternly, "thousands of starving settlers in the Totuma Valley to earn a frugal livelihood by strenuous agricultural—ah—efforts. Ten thousand Americans, sir, will be enabled to live—barely to live ——"

"If this outrageous rob —— If this irrigation project of yours will enable ten thousand fellow citizens who don't vote in your state barely to live, what in Hades are they doing now, without the reservoir?" inquired the senator from Pawtucket.

"The senator from Pawtucket asks what these men are doing? I answer, Mr. President: Dying! Watering their parched gardens with their tears, sir; that and—hoping, sir!" The Honorable Stanford Ray looked defiantly at his colleague.

"There are no reporters round, Stanford. And you know damned well that you can't possibly get a vote on this confounded ——"

"Why can't I?" very coldly interrupted Ray. "What constitutional barrier or insurmountable legal obstacle exists in reality, or even in your unprejudiced mind?"

"You know the Appropriation Bill is ——"

"I ask for no appropriation. I request merely that the Secretary of the Interior be instructed to use greater haste in building the long-promised and much-needed dam at Pajaritos than on some similar project in another state."

"But not this session," coaxingly said the senator from Pawtucket.

"*Nil desperandum, Teucro duce!*" retorted S. Ray with a courteous bow in the direction of the Honorable J. Rallston, senator from Pawtucket.

"Well, Teucer says perhaps next session, if you are very good."

"Oh, yes?" said S. Ray very politely. "Oh, yes?" he repeated. "Well, Rallston, think it over, will you?" And he resumed his writing.

All that day he behaved as an organization man behaves. He voted for all party measures; helped his colleagues from Pawtucket, Vermont and Iowa, who had not been nice to his own Pajaritos Dam Bill. But the next day he strolled over to the leader's desk and whispered:

"I say, Jerry, I am going to ask for action on my bill, Number X Y Z."

"Which is that, Stanford?"

"Pajaritos Dam."

"Damn Pajaritos! Don't be stubborn, old man! We can't—this session."

The Honorable J. Rallston was frowning; whereupon the Honorable S. Ray smiled amiably and said:

"We must!"

"Why are you so keen for this project when ——"

"Ten thousand honest American settlers are waiting for water, praying for it, dying for the want of it. Besides, some of them live in Apachia."

"Is it very necessary?" asked the leader.

"Very!"

"I'll do what I can," promised the Honorable J. Rallston.

He always made it a point to recognize the necessities of his allies. If Stanford Ray—intelligent, as evidenced by his political control of his own state; unscrupulous, as proved by the fatalities among his enemies; familiar with

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THE PFLUMPADINK

By Richard Washburn Child

NOTHING about the night of July fifth invited dark deeds. No storm howled without; no wind moaned around the gables of the Illingworth country house; no impenetrable darkness shut Marjorie Illingworth from the wide universe. The only circumstance which could have contributed to terror and tragedy was the fact that the keeper, old Henry Nordstrom, had been called away for three days to New York for his annual attendance at the Norwegian Association Clambake and the Rose Growers' Convention; and, therefore, Marjorie was alone on the half-million-dollar estate with the deaf and ancient Martha, who was asleep in the northeastern turret, where the architects had located the luxurious servants' quarters. There were not even any suspicious noises; the most mysterious and the only sound was the throbbing chorus of crickets on the sweeping expanses of lawn.

The night, like the crickets, had a quiet pulsation. Marjorie, who sat at her bedroom window, inviting touches of soft breezes to her bare neck and forearms, and to the stray locks of silken brown hair about her ears, stared out at this world of night and imagined that the tranquillity and peace of the scene before her tired young eyes were throbbing too. The moonlight throbbed in pale, silvery pulsations across the lawn; the shadows of the oaks and the shrubbery did not tremble as shadows sometimes tremble, but expanded and contracted on the carpet of moonhght, like intermittent swellings of a slow-beating heart. The quiet, the radiance, the peace and the pulsation of the night were beautiful; but the beauty was terrible.

Far away, across the rolling shoreland of the Hudson, a clock on the village town hall struck two.

"Oh, dear!" said Marjorie. "No sleep!"

She was twenty. Twenty is too young for insomnia. But after her second season in New York society and a summer abroad, sandwiched between—after late dances in Louis-Quinze rooms and early rides to hounds over wet Long Island pastures; after much coffee, candy and cold drafts, and little repose or repair—Marjorie had awaked one morning in a small palace of a town house near Central Park, weeping bitterly about nothing.

She had tried to tell Dr. Nicholas Elsmere, the nerve specialist, the cause of her grief was that her life seemed to her futile and silly, and an eternal round of deeblank foolishness; and that it was really nothing about which she was shedding round crystal tears that ran down her healthy young cheeks across the temporary pallor, and finally rolled from the upper pink lip to the lower pink lip of a reasonably good magazine-cover mouth. But the great wise man, with a shirt bosom that squeaked beneath his frock coat as he breathed so ponderously, had said:

"She mustn't go with the family to Bar Harbor. Send her alone, absolutely alone, except for some old family retainer, to Illingoak. I know what a stupid old time she will have. She has had too much excitement."

"I haven't, at all!" said Marjorie vehemently. "But I'm tired of dancing and riding, and saying the same things over and over to men who say the same things over and over. I love excitement; but there isn't any. I should like to join a circus."

The protest was in vain. Marjorie had inherited a strong will from Alexander Illingworth, the grizzled veteran of a quarter century of Wall Street reorganizations; but the head of the house still had the lion's share of finality of decision. His daughter, feeling that his experience with a life of work was somewhat more elaborate than her own with a life of play, even when play was taken as seriously as a business, became an obedient child, relinquishing, for the time and occasion, her calm bearing and mannerisms of a carefully selected, sophisticated, cynical, snobbish young woman of the smart world. She took all her perfect appointments—Venetian-glass perfume bottles, silver shoe trees, vanity cases, worthless novels, photographs of five young men who said and did the proper thing when necessary, and the supposedly attractive improper things at champagne wedding breakfasts—and she went to Illingoak.

Illingoak had been built by Alexander the Third, as her father was called, when Marjorie was five. She recalled it as the place of her childhood, and asked her father to give it to her as a wedding present.

"Oh, of course," he had said, "I suspect that one of the wrist-watch, dancing-pump brigade your mother selects for you will some day be puffing cigarettes in the library where I and Tom Beekman, who was a real man, consummated the Panther Oil Consolidation. But never mind! Illingoak is yours."

Marjorie, therefore, had come to the estate with a sense of proprietorship. There was a passing novelty, too, in being alone on a great place that overlooked the groves and fields between its pretentious fences and the distant wooden-church-spired sleepy village on the edge of the Hudson River.

"I Am Bored. You May Go"

Imogene Fastidious, a four-thousand-dollar mare, had been sent up in the Illingworth box car, and Marjorie had ridden round before breakfast the first morning.

She had returned in a rage.

"What is it, miss?" asked the impertinent old Martha, who had harbored secretly the notion that it was her service which had prevented the Illingworth family from going straight to.

"Someone has bought a piece of land about as big as a tablecloth right next to ours, and has been trying to fit a house onto it. It screams aloud: 'I'm a bungalow. Own me for a dollar a week.' The worst of it is that the upper windows look right down into our garden and every dollar we spend with landscape architects will be worth the same ten cents to those horrid people as it is to us."

"Bless me soul!" said poor Martha. "Who is it owns it?"

"A pflumpadink!" Marjorie exclaimed.

"What's a pflumpadink?" asked the other, with frightened eyes staring at the Illingworth heiress and neurasthenic, whose smooth forehead was covered with little glistening beads of exercise.

"I know what it is. Bobby Benjamin told me. A pflumpadink is a man between twenty and thirty who wears ready-made clothes, and maybe belongs to the Y. M. C. A., and has a salary, and carries bundles, and sends his washing out to a laundry in a bag with initials embroidered on it by his girl. You can see pflumpadinks on any Sunday trying to make three-cylinder cars go on the state roads. A pflumpadink always marries a girl who knows that her husband can attend to the furnace. He gives Omar, bound in ooze leather, for Christmas presents, and smokes ten-cent cigars. He plays golf on the Municipal Links and sings The Palms. He thinks initial stationery is swell, and his dream is to have a smoker's jacket and be correct in the home. Sometimes his ears are prominent, and he talks about suburban life and raising eggs for profit; and he thinks the people who sit in the Peacock Alleys of New York hotels are the Four Hundred. He takes the five-fifteen to go home, with a pound of coffee and a bluefish; and has been introduced to Christy Mathewson, and knows that it is improper to eat peas with a knife instead of a spoon. That's a pflumpadink!"

"Oh! His name is Arthur Dole, miss," said Martha. "I heard the gardener say so. He built a part of the house himself, miss, by working Saturdays and Sundays, and mashed his thumb half a dozen times by hammering after dark."

"Oh, I saw this fellow!" Marjorie said. "In his shirt sleeves. He has a lawn in front as large as a handkerchief, and he was giving it a complete drenching with a green watering pot before he ran down the road with his little red commutation ticket. Oh, I know these pflumpadinks!"

But now, after three weeks, on this still and pulsing night, and at the window of the sitting room of her apartment, the girl, unable to sleep, looked despairingly at the tossed and moonlit sheets of her bed in the next room, and then at the roof of the pflumpadink's bungalow, which projected its absurd little corner windows and gables above the Japanese cherry trees at the end of the garden.

The suburbanite's house was far away. First there were the shrubs beneath her window, among which some flowering bush sent up a perfume too sweet for pleasantness; beyond them the velvet, moonlit, throbbing lawn stretched down to the unused tennis courts; and then the boundary of the garden was announced by a hedge and a shaft of marble bearing a satyr's head, which at the distance appeared as a white pellet upon a tiny pedestal. The home of Arthur Dole was a shapeless lump of black against the night purple of the sky. Marjorie knew that the pflumpadink was in it; she guessed that he was snoring.

"This is unbearable!" she said aloud. "So much peace is an evil too great to stand. The world aches with it. A scream—a piercing scream—would be a lovely thing—something to split the night and crack open these awful hours and scare the crickets into silence. Illingoak is a terrible castle of nightmares."

She jumped from the white wicker lounging chair to stare at herself in the mirror, which reached from top to bottom of the bedroom door. Her dressing gown gave her the appearance of a ghost; but of a ghost of a young person with latent strength and vitality in poise of body and firm flesh, and, say what the doctors would about neurasthenia, with a half-mischievous smile upon her lips.

Turning from the mirror, she placed her warm fingertips upon the cool marble of the fireplace mantel and gazed first at one and then another of the five proper young men who appeared so well dressed in the five moonlit photographs. She remembered that Lucille Van Coorland had said:

"My dear, you are inimitable. It is such a terribly vulgar thing—shopgirly thing—to have photographs of people. It is as disgusting as having one's own face appear in photogravure in Sunday papers. But you can do the things that common people can't do and get away with it simply splendidly. And that's a sign of being sure of oneself. That's why I love people in our set to be beastly rude—it shows they are so well bred that they are beyond caring."

"But they are all just nice, good-looking, foolish men," said Marjorie, sighing, as she turned from the mantelpiece. "I adore them all; but they all say the same things. I wish I were a savage. I wish I knew someone to send telegrams to. But Bobby Bobo Benjamin—you are the best yet! I might love you—if you were a refined bank robber instead of a broker with a little mustache. But Illingoak is so stupid, Bobby. I can't even write you a letter thanking you for your flowers. I want excitement. I wish Illingoak wasn't a stone castle and then I'd set it on fire, Bobby."

There was joy in this desperate suggestion. After all, what could be the harm in doing something terrible? The Illingworth millions could always pay. She had the subconscious joy of being a creature of special privilege, who could be driven to no reckoning.

"Darn the young pflumpadink!" she exclaimed. "If I had a rifle I'd shoot the windows out of his bungalow nest. I know he built it for a blonde who has promised to wait for him. These pflumpadinks never dare to get married to female pflumpadinks until they have enough to insure the Mission furniture. They have no spirit. If they did they'd get married—bang! I wish I could sleep!"

She sat down again in the wicker chair and stared out at the pale, silvery night with its throbbing peacefulness. In the shadows of the five oaks beyond the fountain a man, had one been concealed there, could have observed her movements.

"Oh, why not?" she said, still talking aloud to interrupt the pulsing of silence and the pulsing of the cricket chorus. "Pflumpadinks are meant to be goats. He will not know who I am. He'll never know the voice. Wake up—you complacent pflumpadink!"

She reached forward for the telephone instrument and, with a gay laugh, slid down into the chair so that she could hold the mouthpiece above her upturned lips. The sleepy telephone operator in the village answered at last.

"I'm ringing Mr. Dole's residence," she said, after Marjorie had directed at the instrument an impatient sigh as the moments passed.

The delay, however, sharpened her joy at seeing the light spring up in the little windows of the bungalow. A clear voice at the other end said:

"Well, what is wanted?"

"What is wanted?" repeated Marjorie to herself. "Isn't that just the very words such a man would use?"

"Hello!" she said aloud. "Are you awake?"

"No, no," came the voice. "I'm still asleep; but if it's anything important I will answer the telephone."

"Are you a brave man—a man of spirit?" asked Marjorie solemnly.

There was a pause.

"Well, I'll tell you—you will have to ask Information," said Dole cheerfully. "There's nobody home."

"Chivalry ——" she began.

"I know—you are going to say that chivalry is dead. Have your way about it. But, seriously, are you—are you in any trouble, Miss Illingworth?"

Miss Illingworth! He had identified her. She had not considered this possibility, except to dismiss it with a hasty conclusion that she did not care what the pflumpadink did or thought. Now she realized that she appeared absurd. She sat up straight and spoke from a sense of obligation to herself and her kind to protect the dignity of her position. She had always dared much. She had been known as a madcap girl who knew her way beforehand out of a scrape, and as a clever young woman who could engage in extremes and always land on her mental feet. To land on her mental neck was a new sensation. Now all ways to save the occasion but one had been cut off from her. She took the one way out.

"I'm sorry," she said with a voice in which the shakiness was sincere. "I am in trouble. I am alone here. There is a burglar in the house."

"All right!" Dole's voice came back. "Keep your nerve. Hide somewhere. Get under a bed and stay there. Do as I say. If you hear any noise—a revolver shot or anything—don't move. Keep where you are—under the bed. I'll telephone for help and come right over."

The idea that he would raise a general alarm had not occurred to her; she knew she must find an excuse to prevent his doing so. The whole village would be up in arms. Explanations would be a terrible bore. Marjorie foresaw that she would have a lifetime of falsehood before her. Her father might come from Bar Harbor on a special train. What a nuisance!

"No! No!" she wailed. "He is coming up the stairs. Hurry, or you'll be too late!"

The man at the other end had dropped the telephone receiver; she could hear it bumping on the wall.

Marjorie gasped. She stood up and pressed her teeth against the tips of her slim young fingers.

"It serves me right for meddling with a pflumpadink," said she. "Now he'll come over and I'll have to talk to him. I'll have to say I was mistaken about the burglar. No; I will not. That would make me out such a fool. I can see him when he comes across the lawn. I'll tell him the man was scared away. I'll flatter his vanity. I'll seal his lips. He'll promise not to tell."

She Recognized the Driver of the Village Hack

Pulling her dressing gown about her shoulders, she stood behind the curtain and gazed across the moonlit grass and shrubbery at the space in the garden hedge where she was sure Dole would break his way through. The light still shone from the cottage windows and she believed she saw shadows moving within the bungalow.

"His courage is bad," she said. "He doesn't dare to come. He will probably telephone for help after all."

The pulsing chorus of crickets seemed to have been interrupted. A cloud slid over the moon and a blanket of darkness suddenly was drawn across the lawn. Some bird disturbed in its slumbers on an oak tree tumbled about and flapped among the leaves before it made its flight. She thought that, out of the corner of her eye, she had seen a shadow moving among the oaks.

"It could not be!" she told herself with a nervous laugh.

Far away the village clock struck three.

"Over a quarter of an hour," she said. "The coward!"

"Not at all," said a voice from out of the darkness at the other side of the room.

Marjorie shut her teeth together to suppress an involuntary scream. She sprang toward the electric-light switch and fumbled on the wall until she had pressed it and a flood of light leaped into the corners.

Leaning against the wainscot, beside the half-closed door into the hall, was a young man.

"I am Dole," said he calmly. "I am sorry I surprised you. On the whole, I never saw so many doors in my life as I found in this house. I have only six or seven in mine, but they squeak more than all there are in this modest château."

"You came in?" gasped the girl, blinking under the glare.

He looked at her bare feet, thrust into a pair of blue Russia-leather bedroom slippers and showing beneath her long dressing gown, and smiled.

"I kicked my own shoes off among the lilac bushes. I found it was necessary to climb up over the front porch," he said as she went behind the sofa. "I know it is not proper to come before a lady walking in mercerized stockings, but one of the chief charms of hunting burglars is to take the burglar by surprise. I read that in a scientific magazine. But it took me quite a time to find you. I looked under seven or eight beds, and I am pained and humiliated to find that you disobeyed me. You are not under yours."

Marjorie for a moment found no words; her throat seemed as dry and rough as pumice stone. She reached behind her and pulled the window shade down almost to the sill; then she stared at the young man before her.

He was an attractive young man, she thought. The upper part of a set of pyjamas was tucked into his belt, and the soft fabric clung to the muscles about his shoulders and fell away from his neck, which was firm and brown, as if he had spent much time in the sunlight. There were grace and easy strength about his careless posture, leaning back against the wall with his large hands flattened against the pale-yellow wall paper and his blue eyes regarding her with a quizzical inspection.

"You should not have come here!" said she impulsively.

"I know it," he replied. "But this was your moving picture and not mine."

Marjorie was furious. If it had not been that he was still breathing hard, as if just finishing some exertion in haste, she would have been able to believe that he had come merely to make game of her.

"You were too late!" she said with an actress' groan.

"Too late! Where has he gone?"

"He went out this window," she replied and, simulating faintness, fell back upon the sofa.

The man walked toward the opening, raised the curtain and, bending down, looked at the fringe of ivy leaves on the ledge outside.

"Yes," said he; and, stooping down quickly, he picked up from the floor shadows a book. "He knocked this off that table?"

Marjorie made her eyelids flutter.

"Yes," she breathed. "He knocked it off in his flight."

"When I whistled he ran."

"When you whistled—yes."

The pflumpadink, without any manners whatever, said:

"I didn't whistle. . . . More than that, Miss Illingworth," he went on, "I took this book from the table and not from the floor. Step here, please."

She was astonished to find herself obeying him.

"Look at these ivy leaves outside the window. There—in the moonlight. They are covered with crystal globules of dew. The slightest touch makes these quicksilver drops roll off. Look! . . . No, Miss Illingworth; no man has gone out this window. I have not read detective stories for nothing. I am the best suburbanite sleuth who ever played bridge in a smoker. Confess, now! You are having sport with a back-to-the-country fiend; you have put me through the initiation. Now what lodge do I belong to?"

He had become intolerable! To be sure, he had improved in appearance by proximity. This she admitted to her own prejudices. He was a straight, powerful and

"Your Ma Said I Was Foolish to Run for Office"

graceful young man, whatever one might say of Y. M. C. A. gymnasiums; his skin was clear and hard, and his eyes untired and capable of showing rapid alternations of seriousness and amusement. He was a better animal than Bobo Benjamin. But his assurance, she thought, was insolent. He had the brazen self-satisfaction of the complacent middle class. For a person of her position he showed no respect; and, indeed, there was a note of contempt in his vulgar phrases. Marjorie remembered that Lucille Van Coorland had said:

"And yet, at the bottom these people recognize their inferiority. All that is necessary is to call one of them 'My good man'—or, if it is a girl, 'My dear young person'—to see how easy it is to drive them back by patronizing them."

She yawned; she said:

"I think you better go. I am no longer amused. Of course, if you care to tell anyone of this and think it will reflect credit on you, pray do so, my good man. I have no doubt you will wonder. It is like your kind to wonder. You are always standing round on the sidewalks when we have one of our church weddings—wondering. Our worlds are quite different. But I am bored. You may go."

Dole smiled. Then, suddenly, a flash of hot, swift intensity leaped into his eyes.

"Sit down, Miss Illingworth," he said clearly but grimly.

"You refuse to go?"

"Sit down!"

He had not changed his position, in which once more he leaned back gracefully against the wall; but she could see his fingers spread out and the muscles on his shoulders hardening.

"You will not go?" she said in a voice of apprehension.

"No," said he. "Sit down."

Marjorie sat down as if physical force had thrust her off her balance, and stared up at him.

"I don't believe you know a real man," he began almost dreamily and with his eyes half shut. "Golf, ticker tape, the maxixe and weak, tall highballs don't make them, Miss Marjorie Illingworth. I know a few real ones, and it takes realer life than is in your world to make men or put lines in the faces of boys. That is why so many of you selected girls find yourselves with husbands who have that cherub face, because they have never known fight at all; or that droop-lined face which comes from fighting oneself all the time. There are one, two, three, four, five on your mantel. Count 'em."

Marjorie cast a quick glance at her reflection in the mirror. Satisfied by her appearance, she turned to find again the look in Dole's eyes that swept the patronizing smile off her own countenance. She felt fear.

"It is rude ——" she faltered.

"Of course! This is a rude night and it will be more rude perhaps than you dream. You have chosen to create an informal situation, and you have been so outspoken with me that I will accept the atmosphere of it all," he said. "You are probably twenty-one; I am five years older.

(Continued on Page 26)

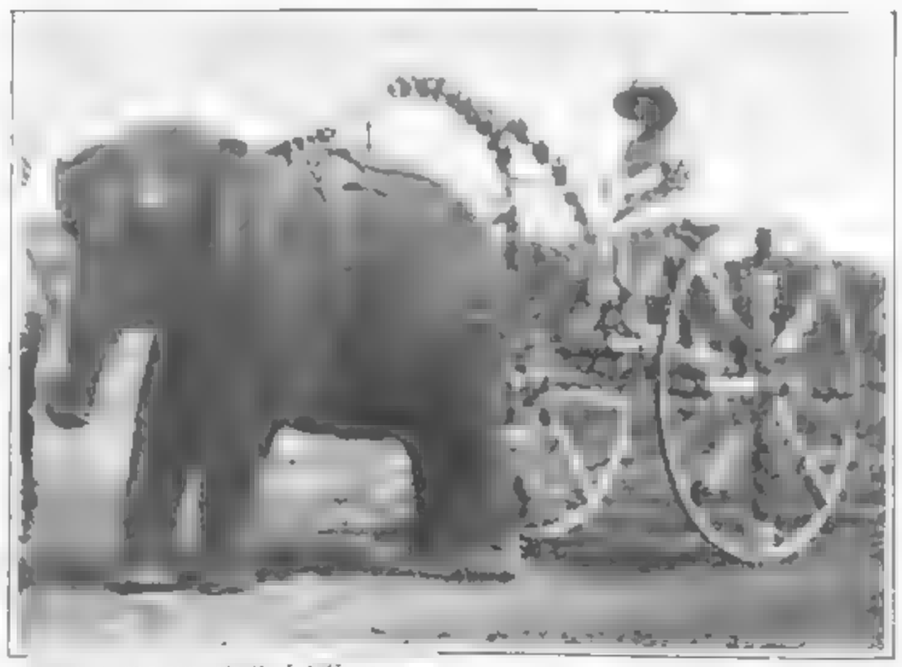
THE CALL OF THE CALLIOPE

By L. B. YATES

IN THE foregoing chapters of this story and intermingled with the narrative of a life spent, for the most part, in trouping with the tents, I have endeavored to give a more or less tangible account of how the big show moves from place to place, and the system which prevails in order that the wheels within wheels may work smoothly. But on reading it over I find that I have said very little about how we ourselves live. To outsiders there is always a certain mystery about that, because whenever anyone discusses the question he invariably speaks about circus people as though they inhabited an unknown and unexplored country.

Now though it is true that they of the circus, because of their peculiar environment, live in a little world of their own, associate, for the most part, with people of the profession, and have little in common with everyday folk who pursue the ordinary occupations of life, they are, for all that, very human and home-loving people.

The seeker for knowledge invariably asks about the women of the circus. To those of an inquiring turn of mind these latter always seem to afford a wide field for conjecture. I never could see particularly why the women who live their daily life under the shadow of the Big Top should be different from other members of their sex. The popular impression goes somewhere away back in the forgotten happenings of the prehistoric period, when the traveling acrobat was classed with vagrants and strolling players; and, though the actor and his sister of sock and buskin have emancipated themselves from the stigma of vagabondage, in the limited scope of the narrow-minded they of the circus still remain in outer darkness.



Circus Girls

IF ONE were to pick a hundred circus women and line them up with one hundred other women in any line of endeavor, who were self-reliant, self-sustaining and, above all, self-respecting, I do not think the daughters of the wandering foot would suffer by comparison. It goes without saying that their life is an intensely busy one, because their days are as full as they will hold of the strenuous happenings in which they must participate. When the day is done they have neither the desire nor the inclination to indulge in those forms of amusement that find their expression between suns.

The circus woman necessarily has to rise betimes. Her toilet is made by six o'clock in the morning, and if the lot is not too far away from the siding on which the sleepers have been parked she walks out. I don't know of anything more delightful than to journey through the cool of a summer's morning and seek the cook tent with an appetite adequate to the tempting bill of fare that is usually displayed on the long tables in abundant profusion. Along the sidewalks or country roads leading to the lot you will see the circus girls coming in twos and threes—perhaps more like a lot of girls going to school than anything else; laughing and chattering like a lot of magpies.

The conversation rarely savors of social nothings. It is usually devoted to events that actually happen; and be it said in this place that the average circus woman has a keen sense of the beautiful and an apt realization of the ridiculous. Best of all, every laugh is on the level.

The circus woman is not a victim of isms or ologies. Some of them may be for suffrage; but if they are I never heard them mention it, because invariably their menfolk transact the business. It may be her brother, father or husband; but, so far as she herself is concerned, she rarely if ever interviews the management on questions relating to business.

Perhaps this is the best evidence of the sterling relations that exist between these people and the serene happiness of their family life. It is one of absolute confidence, because no self-respecting man of the circus ever mistreats his womenfolk. There have been, it is true, a few instances of the kind, but the transgressor never got away with it; and, no matter how excellent was his act, he seemed gradually to slip down in the scale until eventually his name was only to be found on the roster of the smaller and cheaper circus.

Immediately after breakfast the woman of the circus must seek the dressing tent and prepare for the parade. Her trunk is always placed in the same spot and beside it the little folding chair on which she sits while making her toilet. Every article inside that trunk has its own particular place. The circus woman could open it in the dark; and were a particular costume wanted, with all its accessories, she could find it. After each is worn it is folded and put away carefully in a little sack, which keeps it from the dust of travel. It is always put back in the trunk in the same order in which it was taken therefrom. And it might be added that the circus girl is a past mistress in the art of making her toilet without assistance.

Returning from the parade she finds dinner waiting for her. The meal is finished by half past twelve or one o'clock. Then it is time to seek the dressing tent again and prepare for the afternoon performance, which usually starts at two o'clock or shortly thereafter. From that time on until half past four the circus girl is busy, because during the afternoon she may have to change her costume six or eight times to appear in different acts. Then by five o'clock the supper bell rings; and after that she may work a while breaking in a new act or elaborating an old one. If not so engaged you will probably find her sitting round on the seats embroidering, because, with hardly an exception, every circus woman is an artist where needlework is concerned.

At half past seven it is time to dress for the evening performance, and by half past ten Polly of the Circus is on her way to the siding, where the sleepers are waiting to take her to the next town. Being only human it is fair to presume that she spends little time in frivolity before she retires.

Added to all this is the fact that the discipline of the circus must be maintained. The rules regarding the conduct of the performers and their intercourse with each other are like the fabled laws of the Medes and Persians. No deviation from them is permitted; and it makes no difference who transgresses them—from the highest-salaried star to the lowest pony boy—the lapse is followed either by fine or dismissal.

For the most part, of course, the women of the circus are married and travel in families; but those who have none of these ties must keep absolutely to themselves, remain in the sections of the cars allotted to them, and comport themselves at all times in a discreet and exemplary manner.

There is a reason for this, which is not altogether Puritanical or based upon the edicts of Mrs. Grundy; for, with seven or eight hundred people moving about the country from place to place, each being called upon to fulfill his or her obligations and undertakings to the latter, it is easy to see how impossible this would be in the execution were not the strictest discipline maintained.

When Polly Goes Home Again

WHEN wintertime comes, and the show has gone to its permanent winter quarters, Polly usually goes home; and be it said to her credit that more often than not she has a very comfortable home to go to. Polly is thrifty. The end of the season usually finds her with a nice little balance on hand to provide her with everything necessary for enjoying the long winter months. Sometimes, of course, you find her in vaudeville or with a moving-picture concern; but this is the exception rather than the rule. After seven months of traveling she wants to go home and rest up.

Besides, she has to make her wardrobe for the coming season and rehearse new acts. In this connection it is interesting to note that Polly rarely buys her costumes. Nine times out of ten she manufactures them herself. So the next time you see the beautiful lady pirouetting gayly on the back of a milk-white steed, and if you have a woman's weakness for clothes, it might not be amiss to note well the skill and artistic blending of color with which these creations are fashioned.

If you want to indict Polly on any count it may be that she would be found guilty of aloofness where people who live outside the circus are concerned, as there is no circle so exclusive as that of the circus; and Polly is just as proud of her pedigree as any eminent social leader could possibly be. After all, why not? Most of them can trace their lineage back for more than a hundred years and point to a long line of distinguished forebears; so the circus girl finds no appeal in the chronicle of social happenings or the people who are featured therein.

All the employees of the circus nowadays travel on regular Pullman sleepers, and with all good shows the equipment is necessarily of the best. The performers are just as well taken care of as they would be were they traveling by regular trains

The married people and single girls travel in their own coaches, and the single men in coaches set apart for them. No visiting back and forth is permitted; and so strictly is this rule enforced that I recall the case of a ticket seller who joined out for the first time and presumed that this rule was obsolete. For his first offense he was fined twenty dollars; for the second, fifty; and subsequently he was discharged. Everybody liked him, but he was not a good trouper.

The canvasmen and other helpers have regular tourist cars with steel bunks. They sleep on good mattresses and their pillowcases and sheets are changed every week. Twice a month the bedding is aired on the outside, while a steam hose is played all over the inside of the car.

Each Pullman has its own porter, the whole train being supervised by a chief porter. The laundry is usually sent out on Sunday morning, just as soon as the sleepers reach their destination, and is brought back on Monday afternoon. The head porter supervises and is responsible for this, and each bundle, with the correct count, is in its owner's berth when he or she reaches the train on Monday evening.

The mail is looked after by the regular circus postman. He is among the first to leave the cars in the morning, and, with a big leather bag over his shoulder, he strikes out for the post office. He usually returns heavily laden and his advent is awaited with interest. In the manager's mail will be found all the advices concerning the next town to be made, so that in case of the unforeseen happening he can hurry an emergency man out on the firing line. Should any doubts exist as to the local situation, the manager turns to the records of former years, which are always kept conveniently in a big leather-bound book in the ticket wagon.

The Publicity of the Circus

ON ITS pages he will find the complete record of the former engagement. It is condensed in form, but to the initiated furnishes an exhaustive fund of data. From it he learns the date on which the circus played that particular town; the state of the weather; the amount of business done in all the departments; the location of the lot and cost of same; the amount paid for the license; how much money was spent in the newspapers and how much with the local billposter; special information regarding accident or entanglement of any kind, and what disposal was made of it; the cost of hay and all other provisions; notes about the health departments and their exactions. Also, how much was paid for having the lot cleaned up after the circus left.

Yea, verily, he is an unwise man who would indulge in statistical argument with the circus manager unless he knows whereof he speaks, for the recording angel of the Big Top does not prevaricate.

PHOTO BY COURTESY OF [illegible] CIRCUS

As often as may be necessary, printed route cards are given out to the circus performers and employees. These contain the itinerary of the circus for the succeeding two or three weeks, and by consulting it they can make arrangements to have their mail or other personal matters forwarded to convenient points.

Perhaps the writer will be pardoned if he has strayed up a bypath to explain and enlarge upon these things; but they are set down here because, as before stated, they belong to the everyday life of the circus, and may in a great measure set at rest many erroneous ideas concerning the people who live the greater part of the year in canvas cities that spring into being with the morning sun and pass out in the night.

Harking back to the show in which I myself was interested, and dealing with the questions that presented themselves in connection with the preparations for the coming season, it was my partner's suggestion that I should add the duties of press agent to the other details of advance which I was already responsible for; and to this end I commenced a close study of the conditions surrounding this important phase of circus life. It was a line of endeavor that I subsequently discovered became the source of a fairly liberal education.

The circus press agent is absolutely *sui generis*. He works with his own hands and without any outside assistance. In this respect he differs from the theatrical advance man, who has the local press agent or house manager to fall back upon. Most of the big shows have two or three promoters of publicity on their pay rolls. As a rule, they are high-salaried men and have a more or less liberal allowance for expenses; but, like all other folk connected with the Big Top, a star press agent earns all he gets, with perhaps a slight margin over, which might be credited to his indefatigable loyalty. Not infrequently the absolute success of an engagement depends on the manner in which he displays his wares on the counter, where the amusement-loving public come seeking bargains.

The circus contracting press agent travels on the Number One advertising car and makes all arrangements for local display in whatever papers are published in the immediate vicinity. He must be—first, last and all the time—a judge of values where printer's ink is considered, and, moreover, be a walking encyclopedia on circulation in all its phases—not only numerically but also as regards the localities covered.

Before leaving winter quarters he is given a list containing the amount appropriated for the press department in the various towns to be visited; and a good agent keeps pretty close within the limit set. In some instances, of course, he is forced to spend more than originally intended: but when a general average is struck at the end of the season it is pretty safe to premise that he will be on the right side of the ledger.

The Wisdom of the Press Agent

WHEN the contracting press agent's labors are concluded he leaves several preliminary announcements with each newspaper and sends back a report to the press agent who follows him. In circus parlance the latter is called "the story man"; he knows by his advices whom to call on, and is also in possession of any special information regarding the nature of the reception that will probably be accorded him, for the path of the contracting agent is not always bestrewn with roses.

Almost without exception, the story man is passing wise in his generation. He knows men and manners, besides possessing a positively uncanny gift in the matter of sizing up and appraising the human side of editorial excellence. I took my first lessons from a veteran in the game. I have met versatile people in my life, but this circus agent had them all beaten by a Sabbath day's journey.

In the first place it was impossible to talk on any subject and find him lacking in intelligent expression concerning it. It did not matter whether the debate was on theology or hunting dogs, the circus man took the center of the floor as a matter of course, and spoke his little piece with conviction. It was all the same to him in peace, war, politics, hospitality or sport; he was the oracle and very last word.

"You have got to start out on the presumption that every editor in the world is the custodian of a bug," said he to me. "These are divided into five classes: He may be strong for religion; for science and art; for sport, which includes horses, dogs and fishing; or perhaps he is an admirer of the fair sex, or not averse to surveying the bottom of a glass. If you talk to one of them for ten minutes, and cannot find out what his bug is, you ain't much of a press agent. After that, kid, it's like playing on a harp of a thousand strings."

This press agent kept a careful record of every town visited by him, together with the name of the editor of each paper; and opposite each name he had drawn little thumb-nail pictures recording what he sensed to be the various bugs possessed by these literary lights. Opposite one man's name, for instance, he had a sketch of a fisherman engaged in that delectable occupation. Another's was embellished by a bottle; a third by a book, which signified that he was literary; and so on right down the line. The record contained the names of every prominent newspaper man from Maine to California and from Montreal to Texas.

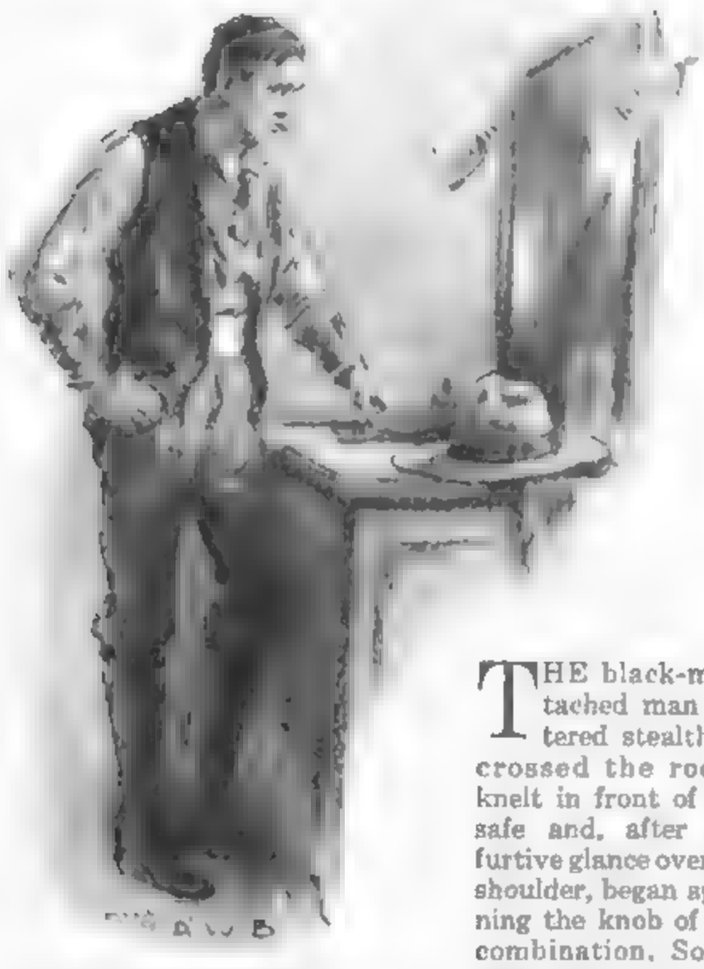
(Continued on Page 29)

PHOTO BY COURTESY OF [illegible] PHOTO

Buck and the Biscuit Shooter

By Charles E. Van Loan

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR WILLIAM BROWN



"You Ain't No Prize Beauty, Parvin"

THE black-mustached man entered stealthily, crossed the room, knelt in front of the safe and, after one furtive glance over his shoulder, began spinning the knob of the combination. So intent was he upon his work that he did not heed the creak of a door or a light footfall behind him. Straight to the heart of the strong box he went, and there he found an envelope containing papers. This he stuffed inside his coat and rose—to be confronted by a handsome, heroic youth in flowing white shirt and Byronic collar—a fearless youth who dared oppose black-mustached villainy empty-handed.

"Put them back!" commanded the handsome one, pointing to the open safe. "Put—those—papers—back!"

"N-n-n-never!"

A struggle ensued in which the hero was fast proving himself the better man, and might have recovered the papers but for a cowardly trick on the part of his opponent. The villain drew a pistol and pulled the trigger at close range. No explosion was heard; but the heroic youth staggered, clutched convulsively at his breast, and slipped to the floor, where he shuddered a few times and became still. The other backed away, pistol covering his victim and teeth bared in a savage snarl; but at the door he halted, stood erect and smiled expectantly.

"Well, Jim," said he, "how was that? Good?"

"Good and rotten!" snapped James Montague, director, from his place beside the camera.

"You ain't talking to me!" ejaculated the heroic youth, scrambling to his feet and dusting his trousers.

"No; I'm talking to Buck. Listen, you bow-legged lobster, and try to get this through your thick head: When you took the papers out of the safe you crammed 'em into your pocket without even looking at 'em. That's against the best traditions of stage and screen. How do you know you didn't get hold of a last year's accident policy or something? Open 'em up, man; look at 'em; smile; nod your head—Aha! me proud and haughty beauty; at last I have you in me power-r!—pat the papers a few times, and then put 'em in your pocket ——"

Buck Parvin, moving-picture cow-puncher by choice, member of a stock company, and playing many parts by virtue of a position on the pay roll, hung his head dejectedly. He was, as he often remarked, at home on a horse and at sea when afoot; and a false mustache annoyed him and gave him a fit of the willies. Bereft of his mount, his chaps, spurs, sombrero and high-heeled Kansas City boots, Mr. Parvin found the road to artistic success a weary one and sprinkled with the thorny cactus of criticism.

"Be easy with me, Jim," said he. "Robbin' a safe don't come natural to me. My folks was poor, but they was honest ——"

"Telegram for Mr. Montague!" chanted a messenger boy, suddenly appearing in the runway between the stage and the dressing rooms.

"Rehearse it over again!" commanded the director as he took the yellow slip from the envelope.

Once more Buck made his stealthy entrance; the safe was opened, the papers duly recognized, and the hero wounded, but all without a word from Montague, who had not once lifted his eyes from the message.

"Was that any better?" asked Buck.

For answer the director howled incoherently and sent his sombrero sailing across the stage. Then he crumpled the telegram into a ball, rammed his fists deep in his pockets, and began to stride up and down, muttering. The members of the Titan Company knew better than to question their peppery chief at such a time. At last the muttering ceased and Montague spoke, wagging his head to give emphasis to his words.

"I'm one of the wonders of the world when it comes to digging up new stunts," said he; "but Dave Seligman is the other six. . . . Oh, well! what's the use? . . . Rehearse it again, boys!"

Buck Parvin heaved a sigh of relief.

"And I thought this caged-lion stuff was pulled for my benefit!" said he. "It was the telegram that upset him. Come on Jack; practice makes perfect."

After the day's work was over, Charlie Jennings, Montague's grizzled assistant, fell heir to a portion of the director's woe. Montague spread the crumpled telegram on his desk and read it aloud, with pauses for appropriate remarks.

Get busy on five-reel feature scenic production unusual backgrounds novel locations something not done before.

SELIGMAN.

"Unusual backgrounds and novel locations!" said Montague. "That's a fine order to give to a man who's lugged his company all over the Pacific Coast hunting scenery! I've filmed everything from Puget Sound to the Mexican line!" A sense of injury overwhelmed him and his voice sharpened to a querulous pitch. "I shot the daylights out of every peak and crag in the Yosemite; I wrote a picture round a Sacramento River flood; I've even sent a camera up in an aëroplane—and now Seligman leans back in his swivel chair and asks for novel locations!"

"And I'm the fair-haired boy that can tell you where to find 'em!"

The director and his assistant looked up, to see Buck Parvin lounging in the doorway, minus his marks of villainy, again the cowpuncher, from the boots to the brown beaver sombrero, inclusive.

"Yes," said he, artistically manipulating a brown-paper cigarette; "I know a place where there ain't nothing but scenery—scenery standin' on end, and sideways, and upside down—any old way except flattened out. For real wildness it's got every other place licked without drawin' a card. . . . How does the Grand Cañon strike you, Jim?"

"The Grand Cañon!" ejaculated the director. "Why didn't I think of that?"

"Because you don't know that country like I do. I was a guide there once."

"A guide!" exclaimed Jennings. "What do they need guides for?"

"So's the people from Emporia and Bellefontaine and Utica will think it's wild and woolly, and up to specifications. Me and Cal Hoggatt took a whirl at the game. I reckon I've been down the Hermit, over the Loop and up the Bright Angel a thousand times, knockin' on a fool mule, herdin' them excursion trippers and answerin' silly questions. Likely I'd have been there yet if I could have thought up any new lies to tell the tourists. There wasn't no variety to the job; so I quit. . . . Jim, ain't you listenin' to me?"

"Get out of here, both of you!" cried the director, whose pencil was flying over a sheet of paper. "How do you suppose I can develop an idea with all this gabble going on?"

Outside, in the hallway, Buck capered joyously and prodded the sober Jennings in the ribs.

"Wonderful guy, that Monty!" said he. "Give him a notion no bigger than a mustard seed, an' he'll build a five-reeler out of it. He's turnin' that Grand Cañon thing over in his nose bag right now."

"I wonder what sort of a scenario it will be?" mused Jennings. "Something elemental—something big ——"

"It better be big!" interrupted Buck. "It'll take a whale of a story to stand out in them Cañon locations. A ham actor turned loose to do his stunts in that place will cut about as much figure as a red ant chasin' round the bottom of one of them two-hundred-thousand-barrel oil tanks!"

II

MR. R. BUCHANAN PARVIN, a vivid splash of color in a colorful land, stood on the edge of the Jumping-Off Place and looked down into a chasm rather more than a mile deep and thirteen miles wide. The mellow afternoon light, striking on a long slant from the rim, illumined old friends; and Buck's gaze, traveling slowly from left to right, saluted them all—the rugged Battleship, in the foreground; Isis Temple, with its crown of white; Cheops Pyramid; Buddha Temple; the barren plateau overlooking the black gorge of the muddy river; the twisting course of Bright Angel Creek; and in the distance the twin peaks of Brahma and Zoroaster.

Many men, standing in the same place, have endeavored to find words to describe the mighty panorama; some of them have been foolish enough to put those words into print, sprinkling their inadequacy with vain exclamation points.

"Same ole gash!" ejaculated Buck, drawing a long breath. "Ain't changed a bit since I've been gone."

Three thousand feet below he spied several black specks moving slowly along the thin red thread that he knew to be the Bright Angel Trail. Buck saluted them with a wave of his cigarette.

"Trippers!" said he aloud. "I'll bet they ain't changed any either. The poor ole guide is ridin' so far ahead that they can't pester him with questions. He can ask for his time; but a mule can't. . . . If I had to be some kind of a animal I wouldn't choose to be a Grand Cañon mule, on account of what they have to stand for. Every day and every day a new tripper—new, but not different. . . . And then they say a mule ain't got no heaven to go to when he dies! Hell on this earth and nothing hereafter—it ain't givin' the poor brutes a square shake!"

A soft ripple of laughter caused Buck to turn his head. Close behind him stood a young woman who had evidently overheard his soliloquy and enjoyed it immensely. She did not seem in the least embarrassed by his scrutiny.

Buck felt his ears redden as he took stock of this attractive person, searching his vocabulary for the word best to describe her, and missing it because "dainty" was not on the list. By the time he had compromised on "cute" he had taken note of her plain white dress and ringless fingers, and his confidence returned with a rush. He swept off his sombrero and bowed.

"Howdy!" said he with a grin. "Didn't know I had a audience, or ——"

"Oh, please don't stop on my account!" said the girl, still laughing. "I've often pitied the mules myself."

"It ain't theory with me," said Buck, seeking to establish himself at once. "I used to be a guide here, sister."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, indeed! But I couldn't stand 'em."

"The mules?"

"No; the trippers. You want to know what ails them people?"

"I should be delighted."

"Well, to begin with, the truth ain't ever strong enough for a tripper. He expects more. He's got his little there-and-back ticket pinned to his wishbone, along with some

"Put—Those—Papers—Back!"

one-dollar bills—not many. He ain't ever able to forget how much the ticket cost him. He's let go of one hundred and forty-two dollars and ten cents just to see big things and listen to big stories. He's read about the West bein' wild an' he don't want nobody to hold out none of the wildness on him. You got to give him twelve reels an' special orchestration or else it's a punk production. He figures to be shocked at every kink in the trail; an' if he ain't shocked to the point where his tongue hangs out like a red razor strop he thinks he's gettin' the worst of it, an' writes letters to his home paper. . . . I shocked 'em till I run out of material; but when they got me to repeatin' myself like a polly parrot I jumped the job—and I ain't talked to a tripper since."

"And how do you know that I'm not a tripper myself?"

"You? Not a chance! In the first place, you don't look it; in the second place, that white dress is a dead give-away, sister."

"A give-away? Why, I—I don't understand ——"

"Yes, you do. . . . You're slingin' hash up at the big hotel. Can't fool me!"

"Oh! . . . The white dress—of course!" Gradually the twinkle came back into the girl's eyes. "Speaking of costumes ——" said she, and completed the sentence with a glance that traveled from the crown of the brown beaver to the tips of the Kansas City boots.

"This ain't no costume," said Buck, slightly nettled. "This is my reg'lar stuff—what I'm used to. Before I got to be an actor I punched cows all over the Southwest."

"An actor?"

"Movie actor," explained Buck, noting the effect out of the corner of one eye. "You won't see any members of our company up at the big hotel, because Jimmy Montague—he's the director—got a fit of penuriousness and lodged the whole gang of us down here at the Bright Angel cottages, where it's cheaper. But we're here, all right, about twenty-five strong; and we're goin' to do the exteriors to a five-reeler."

"A five-reeler?"

"A big feature, with stunts in it."

"How thrilling! I wonder if I could see it."

"Nobody can stop you," said Buck. "You seem kind of crazy about this business. Did you ever get the notion you'd like to act?"

"I—I hadn't thought of it. Why?"

"Oh, nothing; but if you think you'd like to try it I might get you on as an extry woman."

"An extra woman?" murmured the girl, clasping her hands. "That would be simply wonderful!"

"Wonderfully simple, you mean," corrected Buck. "Jim was sayin' on the train last night that he counted on pickin' up some folks here. I reckon I can fix it with him easy enough. I'm pretty strong with the boss—bringin' the company down here was my notion in the first place; and he'd do it as a favor to me. You'll photograph good—you got just the face for it—no, I ain't kiddin'. I mean it. You'd have what they call 'screen charm.'"

"I believe I'd love it!" cried the girl.

"Yes; and you'll get three big dobey dollars for every day you work; don't overlook that. Three per, just to walk on and off, ain't so terrible rotten. Question is, Will they let you take a vacation?"

"Why—I think so. Yes; I'm sure they would."

"Then that's all right. And if you make good, sister, you may fall into a steady job that beats slingin' hash!"

"Do you really think so?"

"Sure, I think so! Would it get me anything to lie to you? Nobody knows where the next movie star will come from. Some of the highest-priced leadin' women broke in as extry people, showed they had talent—and look at 'em now!"

"I Reckon You're Like I am—You Get Acquainted Quick or You Don't Get Acquainted at All"

But the young woman looked at Buck instead—a steady, level gaze.

"And why should you do this for me—a stranger?"

"Well," said Buck slowly, "maybe it's because I don't feel like a stranger. There's folks that I take a notion to on sight. Then again, slingin' hash is no job for a little bit of a thing like you; and if I could kind of boost you into something better I'd be glad. That's why, I reckon. . . . Shall I speak to Jim?"

"Please. And you won't tell him ——"

"That you're a biscuit shooter? Shucks! What difference would that make? It won't show on the screen. Nobody'd ever know it to look at you, and looks are what count in this game. But if you'd rather ——"

"I believe I would rather," said the girl.

"All right. I won't mention it to Jim; but—when am I goin' to see you again?"

"Well," and the girl's eyes sparkled, "I usually walk to Hopi Point every morning—between nine and ten."

"I was thinkin' I'd do that little thing to-morrow mornin' myself," grinned Buck. "By that time I'll know what Jim says. I reckon you're like I am—you get acquainted quick or you don't get acquainted at all. There was a girl once ——"

"I think I must be going now, Mister ——"

"Parvin—Buck Parvin. You haven't told me your name though."

"Does it make any difference?"

"Not specially—only I'd like to know what to call you."

The girl laughed, a merry little ripple of sound that swelled to a duet.

"Call me sister," said she. "You've called me that three times already."

Buck watched her until she was no more than a speck of white, fluttering along the rim of the cañon.

"And to think that a classy little woman like that has to sling hash for a living!" said he. "Damn if it ain't enough to make a man a socialist! . . . She remembered how many times I called her sister. Reckon she ain't been biscuit shootin' very long."

III

THE steep crags that overhang Horn Creek looked down on a strange sight. Half a dozen men, blue-shirted and booted, were crawling up the dry bed of the stream, pausing from time to time for consultation. Most of them carried rifles.

It was evident that they were tracking something or somebody; also evident that silence was not necessary in this pursuit, for the entire Cañon resounded with loud bellowings from Montague's megaphone.

"Not so fast, there! . . . You're puzzled about the trail, remember. . . . Use your hands more, Buck. Point once in a while! You extra man—don't look at the camera! . . . Come on, again! . . . Now then, out you go! Right up over the white rock! Out with you! . . . Enough, Charlie."

Charlie Dupree, camera man, stopped grinding.

"It ran a little longer than I thought it would," said he. "Fifty feet; but all good stuff. Gosh! What a view from here—eh?"

"Now then, Manners and La Rue!" shouted Montague. "Hurry up before we get a light change! . . . You're following the posse. Jack, don't you forget to limp with that left leg."

Buck scrambled out of the bed of the creek and climbed to a flat rock, where he flung himself down beside a girl dressed in the conventional moving-picture Western riding costume, including the sombrero and the fringed skirt of buckskin, knee length. The young woman was ruefully regarding herself in a small mirror.

"Well, sister," said Buck, "here we are—on the job! How do you like the game as far's you've gone?"

"It's fascinating," laughed the girl—"all but this terrible make-up. I had no idea so much paint and powder were necessary. I suppose I look a perfect fright!"

"You do not!" said Buck stoutly. "And, anyway, I'm used to it. Of course I ain't sayin' I don't like you better without a make-up, but you've got to dope your face up a lot or else you won't photograph worth a cent. Wait till you play a snow picture and have to paint your face yellow!"

"Horrors!"

"Oh, there's lots of queer angles in this business. Been in any scenes yet?"

"Two; and Mr. Montague said I did very well."

"That's good news. Far be it from Jim to waste any compliments on actors, let alone extry people. He usually bawls 'em out; but he don't really mean it. It's just his way. . . . So you think you like the game?"

"Yes; but I can't make out what it's all about. Do you know?"

"I ain't seen a copy of the script; which don't help much, because Jim always puts in a lot of stuff as he goes along. Kind of a genius, that way. All you got to do is just what he says. You ain't supposed to know the story. . . . Well, anyway, it beats slingin' hash, sister."

"Yes, indeed. Miss Manners is pretty, isn't she?"

"Not near as pretty as some I've seen," said Buck boldly. "She's nice though."

"She seems to be. She was good enough to help me with this awful make-up."

"We got a good company," boasted Buck—"that is, nice folks in it. Like a big family. Everybody helps everybody else—all except that swelled-up La Rue."

"He's the leading man?"

"Yes; and can't forget it a minute. You ought to hear him howl if you get between him an' the camera when he's workin' up a scene! Not a b-a-d feller, you know, but actor all through; always thinkin' about La Rue. Quite a masher, Jack is. If he bothers you any ——"

"He won't," said the girl positively.

"I reckon you learned how to take care of yourself, slingin' hash," said Buck. "Lots of fresh guys try to flirt with a waitress. I did—once. Only once! It was when I was down in the Pecos country. 'Hello, Bright Eyes!' I says; an' she busted me over the head with a skillet." He laughed at the recollection. "I was combin' ham an' aigs out of my hair for a week. Since then I've known better than to get gay with a woman when she's got a skillet handy. . . . You know, sister, you learn something all the time. Once I put up at a swell hotel in Denver, just to see what it would be like. Out in the bathroom there was a alcove in the wall and a handle that you pulled down. Says I to me, 'What is this dod-gummed

(Continued on Page 52)

THE MAN NEXT DOOR

By EMERSON HOUGH

ILLUSTRATED BY WILL GREFÉ

XXVIII

A PAPER come out, with a picture of the Wisner fence, showing the place where the hole had been broke through. It was marked with a star to show where it was at. The man that wrote the story said here was a modern case of Pyramus and Thisbe. Who they was I don't know; but like enough they lived on the South Side. There was pictures this time of our William and their Emmy. I didn't read any more about the thing, for I was sore on the whole business, and considerable worried about Old Man Wright, what he was going to do. But at part of the piece it said something I happened to see.

"Evidently," it says, "though it may be difficult for a young man to kiss a girl through a four-foot wall, this aperture, opening or orifice, without doubt or question originally was intended as an avenue for Mr. Pyramus to achieve access occasionally, if not to the lips, at least to the ears of little Miss Thisbe. Which leaves it," says he, "only a question of who was Mr. Pyramus and who Miss Thisbe. As to this, Alderman Wright has steadily denied himself to the press, while Mrs. Wisner, the only member of the family at home on the other side of the wall, also refuses to talk. It is well known that Mr. Wisner has been absent in Europe on important business connected with the war loan ——"

I read that far to Old Man Wright and then he broke out.

"War loan!" says he. "It's a loan for his own self that he's looking for. He's lost four million dollars on that irrigation scheme of his when he bought our ranch. Now I'm going to foreclose and he knows it. He's got his funds tied up in cargoes of meat and grain that got confisticated. He's short, and damn short! And I know it; and these are times when banks ain't loosening much. War—yes; I'll show him war! There can't nobody get title to a foot of that land till Old Man Wisner gets his title from me—and he ain't never going to get it. If it's my last act I'll ruin him. I trusted you, and you turned me down. I trusted her, and she threw me down. I won't trust nobody no more, except myself.

"What's it come to?" says he to hisself after a while, looking around at the big rooms. "What did it all come to what I done for her? And I give up the ranch for her—and the life I loved!"

"The sun was on the hills when I was out there, Colonel," says I to him, sudden, happening to think of something, "and the sky was blue as it ever was; and the wind was just carrying the smell of the sage, like it used to; and the river was running white on the rifles, same as it did before. And the cows ——"

"Don't, Curly!" says he. "Don't!"

"I won't no more, Colonel," says I. "I won't be on your pay roll much longer; but them old days ——"

"Don't!" says he. "I can't think about the old days no more. I'm closing the books now, Curly."

"So'm I," says I.

"What do you mean?" says he. "I ain't right clear about some things."

"No; you ain't," says I. "So long as it's fair war I'm in with you; but when it comes to making war on women and children—I ain't in."

"Children! Curly, what do you mean?"

"Children," says I, "is all there is to things. Buck the game the way you want to, Colonel," says I; "but when you buck the child game you're bucking Gawd Almighty His own self. He's got it framed up so He can't lose. Them two couldn't help theirselfs. I've got to finish some day, same as you. All right; I'll finish with them."

Then I shook hands with him and he done so with me. He looks me keen in the eyes and I looks him keen back. We didn't neither of us weaken. This was a heap the hardest thing we'd ever faced together, but we didn't neither of us flicker. We'd both decided what we thought was right.

"Son," says he after a while, "you're some man after all." And he puts his hand on my shoulder like he used to.

"She ain't got no ma," says I to him the last thing. "I'm half her pa, the only half she's got left; and I'll stick if her father don't. But she ain't got no ma. That's what makes me so sorry for the kid," says I.

She Didn't Say a Word; She Was Scared. She Knew Where He Carried His Gun

He looks at me, with his eyes wide open, but he didn't talk none.

"I seen her setting right there, Colonel," says I, "in this room, on our old hide lounge—her wringing her hands like she'd tear 'em apart. She was bucking a hard game then, and doing her best to play it fair—her just a kid, with no special chance to be so very wise, and not having no ma. She didn't have a soul to go to, and all that was worrying her was which side of the game she really was on. For she knew, even if we didn't, like I told you just now—she must of knew it somehow—there's one particular game that Gawd Almighty plays so He can't lose."

He groaned like I hated to hear. But he didn't weaken. I knew he couldn't quit.

XXIX

TO-DAY was the day Old Man Wisner was to get home; and that evening me and Old Man Wright laid out to go over there and have a talk with him. So a lot of things had to be done that day.

Old Man Wright he got up at sunup, and almost all day he was busy in the room he used for a office at the house; he hadn't hardly went down town at all since Bonnie Bell run away. He had a desk full of papers here, and now he sent for his lawyer and his barber to come over early.

"Why, Alderman," says the lawyer man, "you act like you was making your last will and testament, and getting ready to close up business."

He laughs then; but Old Man Wright don't laugh.

"I am," says he. "It's time; I've been dead more'n a week now."

They made out some papers about houses and lots and stocks and things, how they was to be distributed in case of the dee-mise of the said John William Wright. Then after a while they come around to the papers in the big case we had against Old Man Wisner for the last deferred payment on the Circle Arrow trade, that hadn't been paid yet and wouldn't be. Old Man Wright sets back and looks at them papers right ca'm.

"I know what Old Man Wisner's been East for," says he. "He couldn't raise that much money—nigh on a million dollars—on anything as wildcat as strawberries and cream in Wyoming; not these times. Even the banks is wise onto that now. Stenographers and clerks and ministers and doctors don't bite like they used to no more; it's harder to find people that's willing to pay in so much a month for a bungalow in Florida or Wyoming while they set home engaged in light and genteel employment. Every once in a while the American people gets took with a spasm of a little horse sense. There's places for peaches and cream, and there's places for cows, but you don't want to get your wires crossed.

"So," says he, "I know I've got Old Man Wisner broke right now. He's been over to Holland to see if he couldn't form a Dutch syndicate for to unload on. The Dutch is the last resort of the American land-boomer. When you can't sell out a bunch of greasewood land for a pineapple colony to no one else, go over and sell it to them Dutch; they're easy. I seen a man one time sell almost all the north end of New Mexico to a Dutch syndicate for a coffee plantation. It was good for cows; but he had pictures of steamboats and canals and things out there in the sagebrush—you've got to have a canal on your blueprint if you sell anything to them Holland people. Like enough Old Man Wisner had pictures of canals; but he couldn't sell this property.

"The result is he's come back here broke. He knows the banks has got wise and they ain't going to back him no further than what they have. They're too busy lending a billion dollars or so to the folks over in Europe to help blow up some steamboats for us.

"Therefore," says he, jarring the paper weight on the table when he brings down his fist, "if times gets any harder, as like enough they will, Dave Wisner's got to let that property go on the market for what it'll bring inside his one year of grace after foreclosure. I know what that means; it'll mean I got a few thousand acres of land more to distribute among my heirs and assigns, my executors, friends, faithful servitors, villagers and others—however you got that figured out in them papers.

"Let me see them papers," says he after a while. "Are you shore you got my girl's name spelled Katherine? And that she gets this city residence here?"

Then they went over it again. But after a while the lawyer got done, and so did the barber, and they both went away; and the old man turns to me.

"Curly," says he, "I'm rich. I'm awful rich. I didn't know how rich I was till I begun to figure it up with Fanstead, Maclay & Horn, my lawyers here. I reckon, taking fair values, I'm worth ten or twelve million dollars—maybe twenty or forty—most of it made in this here town in a couple of years or so, and all out of the Wisner money we got for the ranch, which we're going to get back pretty nigh clean of cost, you might say. I didn't mean to; but I'm rich—awful rich!

"And so, seeing I ain't got no heirs of my own blood and kin, I been looking around for a few others. There's that Katherine; she's a good girl. She kissed me right here once." And the old man put his hand on the top of his haid. "I'm going to give her a little something after I'm dead; for instance, this house and the things here—half a million dollars maybe. Likewise, I've fixed up a few things for my faithful servitor aforesaid, Henry Absalom Wilson—which is you, Curly. I give you only enough for cigarette money," says he; "never mind how much. And as for them two," says he—"her and the Wisner's hired man—not a cent! Not a damned cent! I'll show him!

"The old ranch," says he, "is going to be fixed up sometime—some of my heirs and executors'll get a hold of that. It's easy to get plenty of heirs if you have twelve or fifty million dollars. I've left instructions to make improvements out there. It'll sort of be the best apology I can make to the woman that's buried out there—Gawd bless her!—as good a woman as ever lived on earth. I can't see how she could have such a girl like she done. Well," he finishes, sort of sighing, "I done my best. I may not live more'n thirty or forty years more.

"So now then, Curly," says he after a while, "since we've finished all our day's work and have a little time left, we can now engage in some simple pastime, such as mumblety-peg, or maybe marbles, till later in the evening. I'm through cutting her off, Curly, and I'm happy. I've left it as clean as I know how. Now I'll bet you a thousand dollars I can beat you three games out of five at mumblety-peg. My executor, without bond," says he, going right on, "is Old Man Kimberly."

"You're on, Colonel," says I; "though I don't know where I'll get a thousand till after your will is probated."

So we went outdoors and set down on the grass and played mumblety-peg—me losing that thousand, natural. Then we sort of fussed around outdoors one way or another till it come towards dark. He left me after a while and went into the house alone.

When I went in I seen him standing by hisself in our ranch room, looking at some things he'd picked up. They was a white silk scarf and a pair of long white gloves he'd like enough found 'em back of the sofa, where Bonnie Bell probably dropped 'em the night when I seen her setting there wringing her hands because she didn't know what to do. We never let no one clean up the ranch room. He put 'em down soft on the sofa and smoothed out the scarf and folded the gloves; it was like he was laying 'em away in a drawer.

We didn't enjoy nothing much to eat, not even ham and aigs. It begun to get dark right soon after that and I sort of wandered out on the front walk to look around. Old Man Wright was in the house by hisself.

Right then I seen a car come in right fast and pull up at the sidewalk about halfway between our house and the Wisners'. Someone got out of the car and come running up our walk. I could see it was a woman. Not wishing no one to be bothered then, I went down to meet her.

It was Bonnie Bell!

She'd come home, then.

I run down the walk to meet her and pushed her away. I knew it wouldn't do for them two to meet now. But she run up and put her arms around my neck. She was alone, though there was someone in the car that hadn't got out.

"Curly!" says she, "Curly! I seen you standing there and I come in. Where is he, Curly?"

I nods behind me.

"In there," says I. "Don't go in—you mustn't."

"I must, sometime. Let me go now."

"No you don't," says I. "You can't. It's too late."

"Too late? Too late? Why, what do you mean, Curly? I've—I've come back! I want to see my dad! I've got to see my dad. There's lots I must tell him. He don't know—I didn't know."

"You can't see your dad no more, kid," says I. "That time has went by. I'm foreman here till midnight of to-day; and while I am, there ain't nobody going to bother him. He's had trouble enough already."

She stood sort of shaking. I had her wrists in my hands.

"I'll Show Him War! If It's My Last Act I'll Ruin Him"

"When it's all over," says I—"meaning a few things we're going to settle to-night—I'll come out to you in Wyoming. I won't be foreman here no more. I'm going to go and throw in with you, even against the old man."

She begun to cry now.

"What are you talking about? I want him!" says she. "I want to see my dad. I need him—and he needs me!"

"Yes; he does need you," says I. "He's needed you for a long time. But you wouldn't like to see him now; he's changed a heap. He ain't got a friend left on earth except me, and that ends at midnight. He's had it pretty rough, when you come to think it all over," says I.

"I must go in, Curly," says she.

"No you can't," says I. "I'm foreman and I won't let you. He wouldn't want it; he's marked you off his books—we just been doing that to-day, with a lawyer and a barber."

"But, Curly, he doesn't know ——"

"Huh!" says I. "Well, he thinks he does. He figures you're the same as if you was dead."

"Curly!" she cries now hard. "Curly, it mustn't be! It's all a mistake; it's all been a mistake. I've come back ——"

"Yes," says I; "it was a mistake. It ain't been nothing but a mistake all down the line. But, as far as it can be squared, the old man and me we've set out to square it to-night. Him and me is going to call on Old Man Wisner this evening," says I. "We're going over as soon as Old Man Wisner gets home. I'm going with your pa, Bonnie. You know me and I reckon you know him too. I reckon there may be some plain conversation, if nothing worse."

"I've got to see him!" says she over and over again.

"Well, if you want to see him," says I, "you go on over there and, like enough, you will see him before long. You belong that side the wall now. To-night is when Old Man Wright and me settles with Old Man Wisner, and settles permanent. We live on this side. But we're coming over."

She turns now and runs away so fast I couldn't catch her.

I seen someone get out of the car now—a man; and she taken his arm and they both went out of sight around the end of the wall. I allowed they'd went up to the door. Right soon I seen a light in their higher windows above the wall—you could just see that much from where I was standing.

If I'd wanted to go upstairs I might of seen more from our windows; but I wouldn't do that now.

I went back in the house and stood near our door, watching the street. In about half or three-quarters of a hour I seen Old Man Wisner's car coming in; there was lights in the car and I could see him plain. He was setting with his haid kind of bent down. I suppose, like enough, he'd already been served with them papers of ours down town. He'd got into town early that morning and been busy all day at his office. He was just getting home now. He must of knew he was busted.

I waited for half a hour more, so things could get right settled down over there, and then I went in and found Old Man Wright. He was setting still as a dead man, looking into the fireplace in our ranch room, though there wasn't no fire. He was all dressed up in his evening clothes; and now I seen why he'd had the barber come. There wasn't a finer-looking gentleman in all the town than Old Man Wright was right then—though him pale and sad. Lord, how sad he was! But not can-nye—none whatever, him, even if Old Lady Wisner had called us all that.

"He's come, Colonel," says I, quiet.

I didn't say nothing to him about who else I'd seen in our front yard; I didn't want to stir him all up, for I knew he'd marked Bonnie Bell offen his books and closed the books for keeps. When I spoke to him he turns around and stands up, quiet.

"Very well," says he; "we'll go on over now."

So we walked together out of our front door. He shuts the door then behind him and we go on down the walk together. He only turns once and looks back at the house.

The whole street laid there in front of us when we walked out from our yard to go over into theirs. The lights was all lit now, miles and miles of 'em; and below us was the hundreds of

"There's Lots I Must Tell Him. He Don't Know—I Didn't Know"

thousands more of the lights of the big city—the city that hadn't made us as happy as we thought it was going to. I heard a boat whistle deep somewheres out on the lake—it sort of made my stomach tremble.

Over west, beyond our part of the city, you could hear a low sort of sound like maybe of street cars; but on our side there wasn't anything but automobiles—thousands of 'em going along as swift and smooth as birds. Most of them was going north still; but on the other side of the street some was going down, maybe with people going to the theaters. It was about the time when people in the city eat what they call dinner. The moon was coming up back of our house, which laid there all black—not a light in it now. I could see the flower beds in our yard, and the white naked statues standing there. It looked right pretty, but cold like a graveyard.

The front door was shut and, the moon being up over east, the part of the house toward us was blacklike. I remembered what the lawyer man had said about things being signed, sealed and delivered. Well, we'd closed the books. It was to hell with them Better Things!

I didn't tell Old Man Wright that Bonnie Bell had been there, because he had things hard enough the way it was and I was working for him yet a little while. He was ca'm as a summer day now.

I'd been his deputy once or twice when we had to go and arrest a bad man. He was now just like he was then. He walks, his thumbs on both sides just resting on the waistband of his pants. I don't know what he had in his mind; but you couldn't of saw the sign of a gun on him and I'd throwed my gun away. His coat tails hung straight down. Outside he was plumb civilized. His face was white and he looked right gentle—just gentle. He wasn't. As for changing him, it would of been as easy to change one of them marble statues over in our garden.

Them Wisners wasn't watching their own gate like they'd ought to of. We walked on up their stairs and the old man rung the bell and stood there, his face without no expression now.

We heard some noises inside there—their dog begun to bark and it seemed like people was talking. Their William opened the door and we all stood there.

Old Man Wright reaches out his arm and pushes him to one side, and him and me go on in, walking fast toward the middle of the house.

xxx

THERE was a curtain across the door between the hall and the room beyond. Old Man Wright made one sweep and throwed open the whole room before us. We stood there in the door, neither of us making any move. Everything stopped then. There wasn't nobody talking no more. What we seen before us was something you couldn't hardly of figured on seeing at all.

They was all setting at the dinner table and they was all dressed up. There was Old Man Wisner and the old lady, and Bonnie Bell—she was setting next to the old lady. Just beyond, and square across the table from us, facing us, was the hired man—the man on whose account we'd come to square things now and leave them signed, sealed and delivered!

I thought it was right funny for their hired man to be eating with them, and him all dressed up just like them.

Then I remembered how fresh he'd always been and how he'd bragged about the pull he had with them people. And I remembered the talk I'd heard between him and Old Lady Wisner too. Anyways, there he was setting, big as life; and if they was having any trouble over anything you couldn't see it. No one was shedding any tears and there didn't seem to be no war going on. It all got me going.

I felt like I was up in the air. I felt like I'd been dreaming about something and hadn't woke up. I couldn't figure out what it was I seen. No one spoke a word.

You must remember that Old Man Wright didn't know yet Bonnie Bell was anywhere within sever'l thousand miles of him. And when he pulled aside the curtain there she was, setting right at their table! And right acrost is a young man setting, too—a young man who he don't know none.

You see, he never had saw that hired man at all, so as to know him. I hadn't told the old man about Bonnie Bell being there, because I allowed he'd find it out anyways. Now he had.

It was Bonnie Bell that moved first—for she knew what might happen. She made one jump for her pa and threw her arms around him—not round his neck, but down around his arms. She didn't try to kiss him—she didn't say a word; she was scared. She knew where he carried his gun—up under his shoulder. I never knew whether she found it or not.

"No!" says she, quick; and she locked her hands behind his back so he couldn't get his arms loose. "No! No; you can't—you shan't! No, no!" she says. "Dad!"

Ordinary she would of been no more than a straw to him, he was that strong. But, you see, he wasn't expecting to see her—and a lot of things come over him all at once. Here she was, with her arms around him anyways; no matter what for.

For once Old Man Wright forgot. His hand only kind of went out to hers where they was, and he says, trembly:

"Bonnie, girl, I didn't know you was here!"

By that time everybody was on their feet. The hired man starts for us, but I stopped him.

"Not yet," says I. "I'm working for the old boss till midnight to-night. You stay where you are."

When I said that Old Man Wisner and Old Lady Wisner they just froze right where they was. But Bonnie Bell didn't. She turns to me now and I felt her hand on my arm.

"What do you mean, you men? Are you crazy?" says she. "I'll not have this! Set down! You, Curly—you make any break here and I'll slap you in the face," says she. "You hear me? Don't you start anything here!"

Well, now, you wouldn't think we'd all been broke up thataway just by a girl, would you? But she had us on the run before we got started. It was mostly because of all this being so unexpected. I didn't expect to see the hired man at their table, and Old Man Wright didn't expect to see Bonnie Bell at all; so the whole herd begun to mill round.

She pushed her pa down into a seat, and me too.

"So that's the way you act when I'm not here!" says she. "You ought to be ashamed of yourselves," says she. "I won't have any more of this."

Their hired man set down now, right serious. He didn't laugh none nor try to pass it off. We all knew that it was a show-down and that it had to go through.

Old Man Wright he didn't seem to look at anyone but Bonnie Bell. If you can say a man can look hungry with his eyes, that's the way he looked then. By this time she was crying, and she puts her arms around his neck now.

"Dad!" says she. "Pore old dad! Pore old foolish, unhappy dad!" Now she begins to kiss him some; but he can't talk none—only pats her shoulders.

"I'm the wretchedest, wickedest girl on earth," says she to him, pushing back his hair, "and I'm the happiest too! Dad, listen to me. You mustn't sit in judgment. Don't take things so hard. Wait—try to see. Try to see if maybe there isn't some other will in the world besides your own, dad—maybe some will bigger than all of ours. I couldn't help it, dad—I couldn't! I'm so happy," says she, "so foolish happy now!"

"Happy?" says he at last; and he pushes her away from him. "With him, there?" He nods now at the hired man, having got him placed. "What's he doing here?"

"Why shouldn't he be here?" says Old Man Wisner right then, speaking for the first time. "*He's my son!*"

"What's that?" says Old Man Wright. "Your son!"

"Shore!" says he. "Who'd you think he was? He can eat at my table. He's done well; he's married the best girl I ever saw!" says he. Then he gets so he can't talk worth a cent too—just natural blows up.

Shucks! I wish't I was most any place else. His son! How could his son be his hired man, and where was the hired man if this wasn't him? I felt myself begin to get sweaty on my face and all over.

"Dave Wisner," says Old Man Wright, "I come acrost to settle things with you. Our account is some long. You've made it hard for me—awful hard!—when you made your hired man run off with my girl. Your son! What kind of talk is this? What do you mean?"

"But he is our son!" says Old Lady Wisner right then, her speaking for the first time. "In heaven's name, who did you think he was? Hired man! What do you mean?"

"It's what I been trying to tell you and Curly," says Bonnie Bell now, holding to her pa's coat with one hand and patting him hard on the shoulder with the other. "I told you it was all a mistake—everything was all mixed up. Except for Gawd's mercy sending me here right now, somebody might of been killed, for all I know," says she. "You men ain't got no more brains than a rabbit. It's time I come!"

"Your son!" says Old Man Wright. "Son! And Curly said he was your hired man!"

Old Man Wisner laughs right out loud at that.

"Hired man! Oh, I see how you thought that! You maybe seen him pottering around in the flowers like—he was always dotty about them things—but no hired man; he wasn't hardly worth a salary."

"And what do you think?" laughs Bonnie Bell at Old Lady Wisner then. "His mother thought once I was a hired girl!"

Old Lady Wisner for quite a while she'd been playing a sort of accompaniment, talking to herself. First, she starts in and says: "Oh, my laws! Oh, my laws sakes! Oh my laws sakes alive!"—over and over again, she was that scared. And now she begun to say: "Bless my soul! Gawd bless my soul! Oh, Gawd bless my soul!" And she says that right over and over again too, like she was practicing her scales.

"I told you, Curly," says Bonnie Bell now, "that there'd been a mistake all around. Why didn't you tell my dad I was here?"

"Well," says I, "I allowed he'd find it out after a while. Ain't he?"

I was sweating awful now and I felt how red my hair was. I toed in so bad my laigs was crossed—my feelings plumb warped me.

"I've found out a lot of things," says Old Man Wright now, right sudden and swift. "I been making some mistakes my own self; but you"—and he faces their hired man now—"you passed yourself for a servant."

"That's true, sir," says he. "I was under false colors for a long while and I hated it as much as anyone could.

(Continued on Page 57)

THE KEY OF THE FIELDS

XIII

By Henry Milner Rideout

ILLUSTRATED BY HENRY RALEIGH

RUTH MOULTRIE was not like Chaucer's heroine, up with the sun. Rarely had she seen the dawn of day except as a spectacle, a "view," a custom for which travelers made arrangement overnight. She would have agreed with that writer—had she known him—who declared early risers are conceited all morning and drowsy all afternoon. Dawns were good; she loved to read of them in poetry; but as a healthy, wealthy and wise girl she always had slept late.

Now the real dawn crept round her unaware. The moon had set, withdrawn its last glowworm light behind the peaks; a few stars, lonely white sparks without luster, were one by one being quenched; and there succeeded, not twilight but a nameless and sorrowful blue element, a profound blue obscurity, as though all the color of the sky had fallen to bottom and darkened the air.

It frightened her, this unearthly medium through which they walked forlorn.

"When shall we reach the path?"

She put the question to Jackdabos, whose white shirt guided their steps.

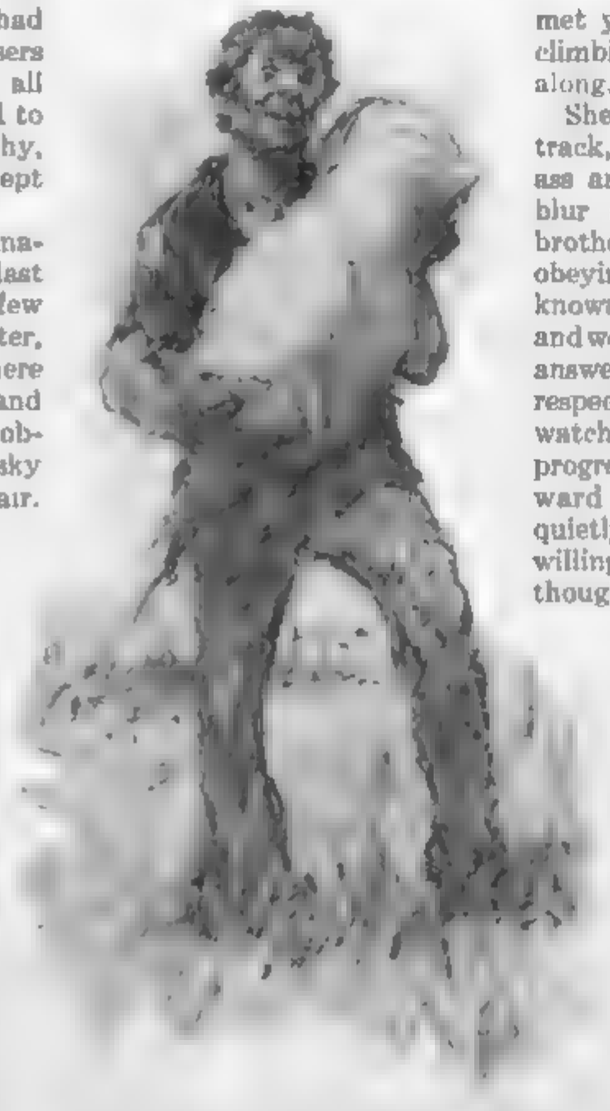
"We're in the path," he answered.

Nothing but bare ledges appeared underfoot, nothing but monstrous gray cliffs and overhanging shadows defined the limits of her wandering.

"Here?" she exclaimed. "Are you sure?"

The white shirt bobbed along composedly.

"I know these hills like my thumb," said Jackdabos. "It is an old path. Some call it the Way of the Saracens. There are different names, although few of those who name it could tell you where it runs. Just now it is the private Corniche of Peter the Ferret. Before we met you to-night I had thought of climbing into this path, but farther along."



The Creature Yelled Some Greeting, Either of Triumph or Derision

She took his word for the unseen track, and followed. Behind her the ass ambled faithfully, another white blur among shadows, carrying her brother, who rode silent as a ghost, and obeying the bridle hand of a dark thing known as Puig. She waited for them and would have talked; but her brother answered in a dazed way, while Puig, respectful but saturnine, was too busily watching step by step the animal's progress. After a time Ruth went forward again: Their leader moved quietly and steadily on, as though unwilling to be overtaken or even to be thought willing. Ruth hated all manner of surliness; but while she continued to walk alone, thinking, it occurred to her that perhaps this little runagate ahead, this man-stabbing conjurer and hill vagabond, was only being polite. It would be curious to know. She quickened her pace and came alongside him.

"My brother still has your coat," she began. "Don't you need it?"

"No, thank you," replied Jackdabos. "I am walking; he must keep still."

He was not surly, but quiet and self-contained. His willingness to answer and then to let conversation drop struck her as a form of courtesy. She would persevere.

"This morning light is very beautiful," she ventured. "I never knew the world could look so old and full of—strangeness."

He smiled at her, sidelong. His face lighted wistfully in the gloom.

"That is the nature of the world," said Jackdabos. "It declares itself best before the day." He walked along in silence, then, tossing a glance back toward the donkey, added: "Just now you were like the Flight into Egypt. I would paint it so, with this dark blue and strangeness, as you said; and these violet-gray mountains butting their heads together like rams; and up aloft the little, slow pink fire beginning to make the snows burn at the tip. Like now. Only you would be riding the ass and holding the Child."

Ruth looked at him quickly, and away. His words took her by surprise, like the sudden opening of a window that revealed both the inward man and the outward prospect of his world. Aloft, very high above this colored solemnity, an Alpine crest had caught the sunrise. A little, slow pink fire kindled, as he had told her, the highest pointed billow of the snow.

"I had not seen it," she confessed. "Are you a painter?"

"No, mademoiselle. I am nothing—nothing but a bad character. The tricks of painting, yes, I know 'em all—the tricks. But not to pass in, deeper, through the face of the canvas. You understand. For me the door of the foreground is locked. Beyond it are those fields and landscapes. No. I have not the key of the fields."

Ruth watched him while he spoke. No less than his words, his manner puzzled her, for it seemed full of regret, discouragement and humility. Often she had recalled that sunny afternoon when they met on Aigues-Mortes rampart. In her memory this young man had remained as a distant enigma, a gay outcast of Provence, clever, mystifying, with a dash of the braggart and the charlatan. Now, at her side, he became another man.

"When you turned this," Ruth raised her rattan, "into the rod of Moses—or was it Pharaoh's? You remember?"

His eyes glowed with somber delight.

"I shall never forget."

The reply startled her. It was no compliment, but a truth suddenly wrenched out of the man. She caught up her broken sentence hastily.

"You said, at the time, that you could do anything."

The Jackdaw groaned and hung his head as he walked.

"Once a fool, always a fool, mademoiselle."

They continued marching together, but for a long time without speaking. Ruth found that her heart began to beat an alarm. "What have we said?" she asked herself. "Nothing. Nonsense. But I thought he disliked me, and he doesn't." That momentary somber glow of the eyes, that promise given against his will, torn from him, declared a certainty which was not at all dislike. She should have been more frightened; she should have been more angry; but fear and anger touched her only with passing wing; for she knew that beside this dark-visaged, fiery-eyed young brawler she walked as safe as ever she had walked with Ralph, her brother. She rejoiced at the knowledge, and marveled at her own rejoicing.

When Jackdabos again spoke he confirmed this wonderful security. He threw off his restraint, and warming, brightening as he went, became a chatterbox.

"A man lived in Castellar," said he, "a friend of Peter the Ferret's, who had a wife so sweet-tempered, mademoiselle, you could hardly tell when she hated you. I knew them both. They owned a very intelligent goat who slept under the bread cage . . ."

It was a merry tale, half truth, half fable. He made her laugh, beguiled the journey with laughter. So this Path of the Saracens wound through the mountains like the way of an eagle in the air, the way of a serpent upon a rock, and the way of a man with a maid.

Certainly Ruth never could have retraced it. Once they went plunging down a narrow glen smothered in tall pines; once they crossed an ancient broken bridge under the arches of which a gray-green river raced and smoked with morning mist; and once her friend, the Jackdaw, halting their little column in a defile among jagged bowlders greater than houses, commanded silence, because they were climbing a forbidden mountain, where soldiers might catch them for spies. Then, after a long, bewildering ascent, they labored up from the last lingering shadow of earth to a desolate Alpine mound, and stood alone with the sunrise, their own shadows pointing far ahead over white grass that sparkled.

"France," said the Jackdaw. "We're well into France, and quite safe."

They gathered round the ass and her rider, drew breath in the golden mountain air, and surveyed this promised land below. Even poor Ralph looked down with hollow eyes and muttered something of admiration. The wild, scarred barriers of gray rock, rolling in gigantic confusion round the sky, were parted asunder. Far down among them, green, smooth like acres of lawn, lay Bevera Valley. A dark, meandering river marred this lawn and, bridging the river with brown-tiled roofs, gray walls, and the stump of its church tower, old Sospel sent up from chimneys here and there a few straight filaments, the early sacrificial smoke of the workmen's breakfast.

Puig called Miss Moultrie's attention to a long, white barracks encumbering the valley floor, apart from Sospel town.

"There," said he, "is the fools' golf house. I will go find a doctor there. Take this, Jacko."

And he held out his bundle of printed papers.

The Jackdaw smiled at him.

"No, keep it, Philibert. I'm going myself. The road's just below here. Wait in the road till I come back with a motor car."

So saying Jackdabos tightened his belt and set off running down the bare hillsides. "Maker of Days!" he prayed while he ran. "Hope I've got enough money. Wish old Barjavel had shot his gold pieces our way."

Ruth Moultrie watched him flying downward from undulation to undulation of the Col. At last he was only a white speck, dancing and wavering against the rim of green Bevera Valley. She stared after that speck intently, but with the feeling of one lost in a dream. It was time for her to be exhausted; she had climbed up, down, and roundabout all night, while Ralph, her leader and chief adviser, sat helpless, waiting to be led. But she was not exhausted or even pale. Her cheeks burned. The Way of the Saracens had put a charm upon her.

Less than one hour later—for Jackdabos ran well—she heard a whining among the hills; and round a turn of the Col de Brouis road, where she waited with Puig and her brother, leaped a powerful black motor car, skimming the incline as a bird skims upward.

It stopped before the ass had time to take fright. Out hopped the Jackdaw, a weary little god from such a great machine.

"The doctor will be at the hotel," said he, doffing his cap. "I made them telephone to Nice. Now if monsieur your brother will let us place him on board?"

Monsieur her brother was lifted carefully from the roadside and laid on leathern cushions. The driver at the wheel, a stoical young Frenchman, scratched his mustache and wondered what his passengers had been doing, but did not inquire.

Ruth leaned from the car to say good-by. She had no leisure then to guess, and never afterward knew, what meager pockets had hired that vehicle, or what humiliation the Jackdaw, in hiring, had suffered from lackeys of the rich. But she was grateful, and sorry to part company.

They Listened to the Story Like People Transported Beyond the Bounds of the Present World

"How can I ever thank you?" she cried as she handed down the Jackdaw's old velveteen coat. "Ever?"

"*Pas de quoi*," muttered Puig.

The ass dropped her long white ears forward and sniffed the taint of petrol in the morning air.

"What shall we do," said Ruth, "with our poor donkey? I can't leave her like this."

The Jackdaw stood thinking rapidly, his hands deep in the empty pockets.

"I'll sell the donkey for you," he replied, "if you like. Sell her at a good price, to a woman who will treat her kindly."

Ruth beamed on him. Here, she thought, was a man who could indeed do anything, a worker of opportune wonders.

"Oh, can you?" she begged. "It will be a great relief to me."

Jackdabos patted the ass' head.

"She will have a good home," he promised, "and you a good bargain." Removing the saddle and its wallets he gave them to the charioteer. "Shall I send the money to your hotel?"

Ruth looked down at him and hesitated. She could trust him, of course. She had only to consent, and say good-by. They were leaving the Saracens' path behind once for all.

"No," she answered on impulse. "Bring the money."

He bowed. Again that somber glow lighted his black eyes.

"To-morrow, mademoiselle?"

"To-morrow."

The stoical young driver, flirting with the laws of gravity, whisked his car about on a mountain edge. Ruth turned and smiled. The two wanderers, holding the donkey, made an obeisance which lasted until the turn of the road intervened, and they stood alone.

"Humph! A hard night's work," sighed Puig with relief as he wiped from his cheeks the soot of the burnt wine bush. "We're well out of that!"

Jackdabos remained listening, cap in hand. His face wore a distant, preoccupied expression.

"Oh, yes," jeered Puig. "You'll see her again." And he crowed in mimicking falsetto: "To-morrow? To-morrow! I'm to be Queen of the May, mother!"

The Jackdaw turned on him over the ass' mane a grin of humorous dismay.

"Don't be foolish, Philibert le Beau."

The freckled smith watched him like a cat.

"I'm not the fool, Jacko, I warn you. Be careful."

For answer Jackdabos took hold of the scarlet bridle and began to lead the ass downhill.

Down and down the road went, doubling in long loops round spur after spur. Morning filled the green meadow valley with brightness

"A magnificent day," sighed Jackdabos, quietly regarding the grim Alpine rocks. "How good to have France under our feet again! I never feel at home in Italy."

"Changing the subject," quoth Puig.

The other put on injured innocence.

"Why," said he, "I'm only going to sell the girl's donkey. At a profit, mind you. She came to the right shop for dealings in horseflesh and assflesh."

He led on, whistling, and spying round the hillside after good herbs with which to make something he had just thought of.

"Bah!" said Puig. "I warn you."

XIV

SARA, the donkey-woman on the Promenade du Midi, found her business rather slack that afternoon. It was hot, the glare intense, the Gulf of Peace very blue and tranquil, with tiny waves which hardly whispered. Sara, planting herself comfortably on the stone wall above the waves, began to knit. There would be no family parties riding in this heat. Her squadron of asses knew as much, and gratefully slumbered at their hitching post. Sara rounded the heel of a stocking and watched the wealthy Northerners go by so aimless, fat and bored while she, a lean, dark woman, thought of so many things.

"What a pretty creature!" exclaimed a woman's voice among the passing parasols.

Sara glanced from her knitting.

Out from the greenery of the Carel gardens came pacing a dainty milk-white ass, so trim, so glossy, so meek and yet spirited, that she might worthily have borne the Faërie Queene.

"Not bad," thought Sara. "Mine are growing dingy, poor cattle."

The milk-white ass wore a scarlet bridle. A swarthy little fellow in velveteen was leading her. They came toward Sara on the sea wall.

"Mother," laughed Jackdabos, "what do you think of this?"

He grinned at Sara, and Sara's brown face lighted with sudden affection.

"That boy again!" she cried for welcome, and dropped her knitting in her lap; then critically: "Pipe clay. You've pipe-clayed her like a circus horse. Is that your profession now, Jacko? Going to sell me a pup?"

The Jackdaw scorned such talk.

"Not for sale, mother. She belongs to the Great. Her name is Mignonette. She is by Narcissus, her first dam Snowdrop, second dam La Vallière."

Sara picked up her knitting and resumed the turn of the heel.

"You lie," she stated calmly. "I can tell all that family by their noses. Better try to sell me the crocodile of Nimes. You are a liar, a young liar, and you've been giving the poor child herbs to drink."

"I've not!" shouted Jackdabos. It was exactly what he had been doing. For some hours he had scrubbed and curried the ass, fed her, pipe-clayed her, and refreshed her with a drink of white wine mixed with mountain herbs. "I have not. She's entirely as you see her, wind and limb."

He hopped up on the sea wall and tucked his arm round Sara's waist.

"I always tell you the truth, mother," he declared. "How awfully well you look!"

Sara laughed. She knew the Jackdaw of old.

"How much are you asking, Jacko?"

They bargained long and shrewdly, with great respect for each other's wit, and with all the joy of merchants from Cathay. Jackdabos argued, swinging his legs; Sara knitted, and grinned, and repulsed him with her elbow; while round them passed the unenjoying crowd, back and forth, along the Promenade by the blue, sunlit gulf.

At last they agreed on a price. The Jackdaw jumped down. "You can't have this!" He took off the red-leather bridle. "But the rest is yours."

Favoring her old bones, the donkey-woman Sara got down off the wall and examined her purchase again.

"Who owned her?" she inquired.

"A lady."

Sara wagged a brown finger.

"Oh, Jackdaw! Fie!"

"There's no commission for me," rejoined the Jackdaw stiffly.

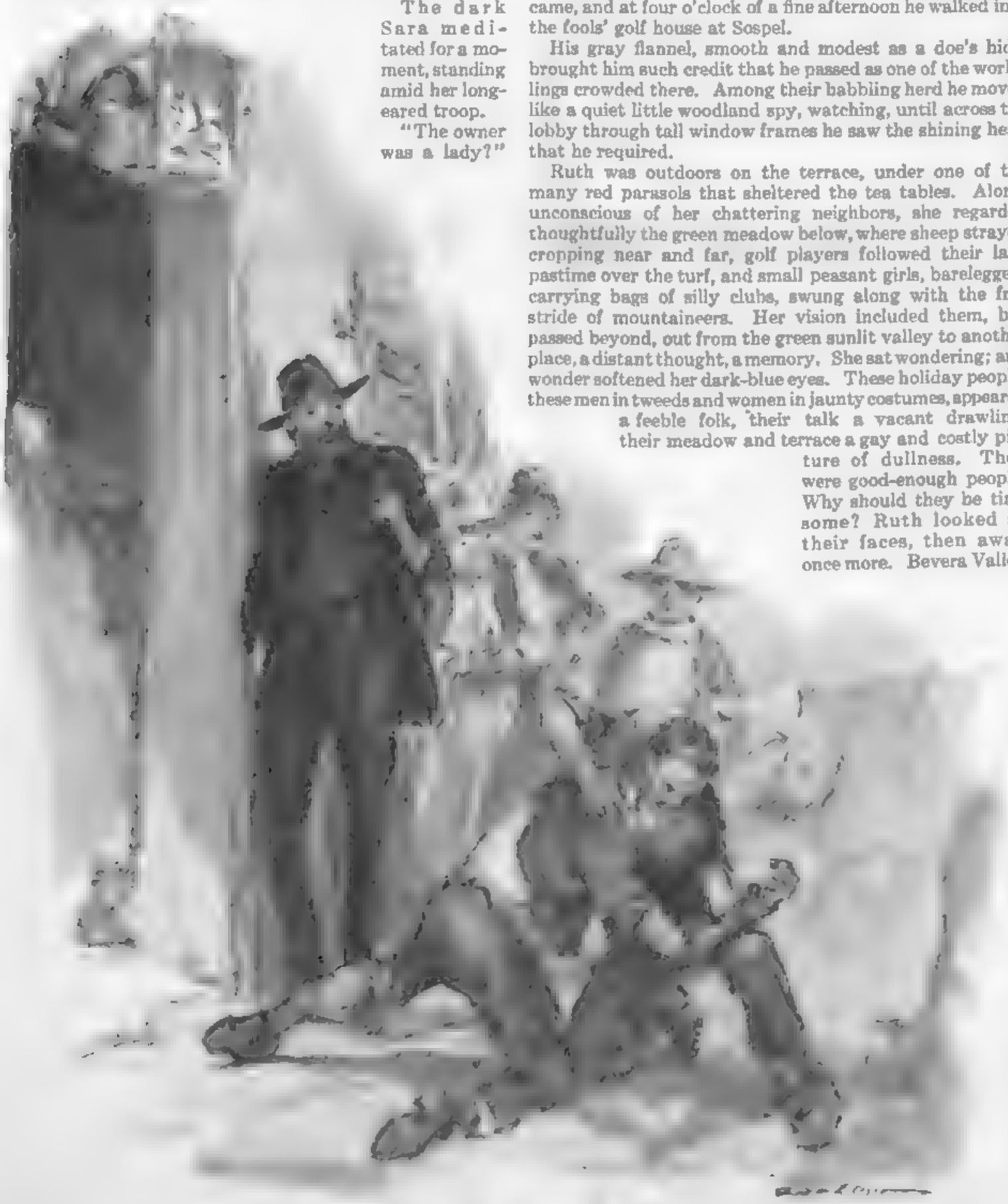
They parted, each with honors of war. Jackdabos carried off a goodly round sum of money, also the scarlet bridle hanging from his hand. A few tourists, gazing toward the bright blue water, saw him bend and embrace the donkey's head. He seemed to them an unaccountable young native. Sara herself could not account for him.

"Why," she demanded, "do you hug the beast?"

"Why not?" said Jackdabos. "It is a good beast. 'Alexamenos worships his god,' maybe. I also am an ass."

The dark Sara meditated for a moment, standing amid her long-eared troop.

"The owner was a lady?"



It Was a Combat Great and Grim, Fought in Silence

she rejoined. "Look out, my son. You seem above yourself. I warn you."

That evening after dusk, when stars began to peep over Mont Agel, there came a loud knocking at the door of a man who made majolica. The man opened his door and saw by his lamplight a very determined, sunburnt face greeting him.

"You offered me a job once," said Jackdabos.

"More than once," retorted the man. "More than twice, young Skip-the-Hedges."

"Advance me one month's pay. I'll come work it out later."

"When?"

"When I can," replied Jackdabos.

"That's cool," grumbled the man.

"Pretty things, kickahaws," urged his visitor. "A full month's work, all new designs hot out o' my head—what you and your blessed tourists call charming, dainty, original, exquisite, refined, attractive, characteristic, damned breakable poppycock and glaze-bosh. To tickle the rich women. I can make it. Pay me now."

"That's cool," said the potter again. "Come in. Perhaps—— If I had money—— Lots of you boys I wouldn't trust, Jacko. Come in."

Later in the same evening a wheelwright who lived beside Gorbio Torrent had let his loft room to a familiar lodger. Till midnight candles and a bright hearth fire burned in the wheelwright's loft, while his lodger worked like a noisy brownie, whistling and singing. Jackdabos had on the floor his old canvas bag, from the mouth of which he carefully drew the only good clothes he possessed in the world. Two borrowed flatirons by the fire stood heating.

"Beast, you are nothing but wrinkles," said the Jackdaw, holding up a dark-gray flannel coat. "Come, submit to the goose. To-morrow you shall do your master credit among the English in their earthly paradise."

There were no wrinkles on Jackdabos when to-morrow came, and at four o'clock of a fine afternoon he walked into the fools' golf house at Sospel.

His gray flannel, smooth and modest as a doe's hide, brought him such credit that he passed as one of the worldlings crowded there. Among their babbling herd he moved like a quiet little woodland spy, watching, until across the lobby through tall window frames he saw the shining head that he required.

Ruth was outdoors on the terrace, under one of the many red parasols that sheltered the tea tables. Alone, unconscious of her chattering neighbors, she regarded thoughtfully the green meadow below, where sheep strayed cropping near and far, golf players followed their lazy pastime over the turf, and small peasant girls, barelegged, carrying bags of silly clubs, swung along with the free stride of mountaineers. Her vision included them, but passed beyond, out from the green sunlit valley to another place, a distant thought, a memory. She sat wondering; and wonder softened her dark-blue eyes. These holiday people, these men in tweeds and women in jaunty costumes, appeared a feeble folk, their talk a vacant drawling, their meadow and terrace a gay and costly picture of dullness. They were good-enough people. Why should they be tiresome? Ruth looked at their faces, then away once more. Bevera Valley was not a valley of contentment. There was a world elsewhere

Her mood was interrupted. A quietly moving figure paused beside her table.

Ruth glanced upward. It was the sunlight under the red parasol, perhaps, that colored her cheeks.

"Ah!" She roused. "You—you startled me."

It was only Jackdabos; but he arrived as promptly and silently as if her thought had called him, a spirit from that world elsewhere. He bowed, hat under arm, with a formal but inborn grace. Not one tea drinker on the terrace could have bowed so, or worn so like a garment the breath of life, the air of Nature.

"You sold my poor pet?" said Ruth. "I am sorry to lose her."

"Yes," replied Jackdabos. "But she will live in clover. She will carry nothing heavier than some pretty little English child. I think she brought a fair price."

He named the sum, and learned with disappointment that it signified nothing. Ruth's face, indeed, grew troubled. She thought this child of Nature might suddenly pour handfuls of money on the tea table. Then she felt ashamed of her fears.

"I left it at the office," continued the Jackdaw. "Mademoiselle is quite satisfied? I have the honor to wish her good evening, and a happy recovery to monsieur her brother."

Again he bowed, and turned to go. Ruth made a little gesture that detained him.

"You have been ever so kind," she said. "How can we show our gratitude? I was thinking only now—I wish——"

She broke off, timid and confused. The young man smiled, with a brave sadness that comprehended all.

"Good-by," said he.

Before she answered there befell an unexpected thing. Toward them, along the terrace, came a woman dressed in white—a tall, slender woman, neither young nor old but of ageless beauty, though a silver frost touched her black hair curving from the temples. A murmur followed her passage, for all the worldlings knew her and sat staring admiration. The Princess—the lady into whose house Jackdabos had once lied his way—advanced directly to Ruth, who rose.

"My dear girl," said the Princess, kissing her, "I'm so glad your brother's accident was no worse. Can he be moved? You must come to me now instead of later. The villa is quite empty."

Both ladies sat down in a pretty flutter of talk which left the Jackdaw standing forgotten. He was about to steal away, when the Princess remembered her manners and cast him a glance.

"What? My little friend?" she asked in a surprise which turned to welcome. "My little friend of the cigala? Oh, do sit down. I have another scolding for you presently."

Thus it happened that Jackdabos, who had ironed his clothes at the wheelwright's for the sake of one moment, of a look and a word, found himself drinking tea with two incomparable ladies. Their tilted scarlet parasol became the center of the terrace, the cynosure of envious eyes. Their glory daunted him at first; but he took heart and, from answering their questions politely, soon was carried into the history of last night, the tale of the Saracens' path, and even some guarded hints of the Trojan Plate. He told it all funnily and well, Ruth and the Princess urging him with laughter. When he ended the sun had crept off the greensward, the evening chill had overtaken them, and it was time to go indoors.

"Remember," said the Princess when they exchanged good night, "you're coming to the villa to-morrow week to spend the afternoon. Remember. We do not trust you, little wretch!"

Sunset lighted his homeward way along the winding road till he passed by ruined Castillon and gained the crest; then sunset burned above the violet immensity of the Guardia rocks as though all the world behind them were blazing fire. Jackdabos had climbed quickly; now he went lagging down Carei gorges, so thoughtful and with such retarded step that the greenish lamps of Mentone garlanded the shore below, and the large moon rose over the sea, long before he came to his wheelwright's house. All the way he carried an inward joy, a secret exaltation, which seemed greater than the mountains, brighter than the evening air.

"It is not over." He hugged that fact in his bosom. "It is not over yet."

On the next day, and six days following, his friend the potter had a new man who worked early and late with a concentrated fury of execution. Jackdabos was overpaying his debt.

"Stay a full year with me," begged the potter in tears, "and we shall make our fortune."

The Jackdaw shook his head.

"I'm serving one week of my sentence," he laughed. "The rest will have to wait. After to-morrow—I don't know what may happen after to-morrow."

With that the laughter died from his face, and he walked somberly out of the potter's trellised garden, leaving unfinished, on his bench, a medallion of the Flight into Egypt.

"If I have to chain him!" raged his master, staring at it. "Why, this would take old Luca himself!"

Without thought of any such triumph the Jackdaw went strolling down the road, then through one street after another, aimlessly. It was early dusk, not yet the lamplighter's hour, and many foreigners loitered still on their way home from their afternoon idleness. The Jackdaw passed with them, dejected, along an avenue where spotted sycamore pillars upheld a canopy of young leaves and wiry branches against the failing sky. A man came pushing a small water cart, like a black dustbin on wheels, which unrolled along the pavement a dark ribbon of moisture, printed with letters where the stone remained dry. "... *Café Lascaris. Nice,*" ran the gray legend underfoot in wearisome repetition. On the top of the water box lay a flat paper parcel. The cart wheel, in passing, grazed the Jackdaw's leg.

"Pardon me, sir," grunted the modern Aquarius. Then he looked up, and caught Jackdabos by the sleeve roughly. "What!" said he. "Hold on!"

The handcart man was Puig—but Puig worn to an anxious, freckled shadow of himself.

"Jacko!" he exclaimed. "I've been looking all over Tophet for you!"

The Jackdaw stared.

"Why did you run away, then, and desert me?"

Puig let the accusation go unanswered. It was true. He had basely carried off the Helen of Troy treasure, and vanished, while his friend was busy with greater affairs.

"See what I've come to!" He kicked the pushcart, which stood drowning its own print. "To this. I'm nigh starving!" He took up from his water box the paper parcel and shook it like a dog worrying a bone. His green eyes shone hollow and desperate. "Your filthy species of a plate, it's killing me. I can't sell it. Who'd buy that from a scarecrow like me? I can't sleep at night for fear o' thieves; can't leave it anywhere daytime. What kind of a job could I get, this devil's thing always under my arm? Worse than being chained to a corpse. It's your fault too. Bah! Have to carry the great lump of a howling fraud on a pushcart! A leak box!"

He bellowed the words, and spat with frenzy. Passers-by looked curiously at him. It was plain that he had spoken one truth at least, for his cheeks were gaunt and fevered with wakefulness.

"This is nowhere to talk," replied the Jackdaw quietly. "Come see me to-night at the wheelwright's."

Puig thrust out his heavy parcel.

"Take it off my hands anyway," said he. "You've got good clothes; maybe you can peddle it. I'm done!"

He slammed the treasure into Jackdaw's arms.

"I'm done!" he roared in a passion.

"What do you expect me ——"

"Don't care," bawled Puig, fiercer than ever. "Do what you like." He seemed beside himself. "If you cheat me I'll kill you." Then with a reckless fling of the arm, as though giving empires away: "What do I care about your trumpery?"

The Jackdaw stood pitying him, though smiling. Thirst of gold was on the man, the cup at his lips, and he could not drink.

"Come see me to-night."

"Good," sighed Puig. "That's a relief." He grasped the handles of his water printing press and grew visibly calmer. "I'll drop round."

They were parting, when to a halt at the curb, a few paces off, there softly trundled a long, gray motor car, its varnish glimmering in the twilight. The driver, a tall man, climbed out and came forward to bend over his lamps.

Puig, watching him mechanically, gave a start and let go the handles again.

"I see the Devil!" he murmured: then with a kind of jubilant snarl: "I see the Devil!"

He turned on Jackdabos a happy face, the face of a man to whom the gods have blown a windfall. "That's the fellow!" he sang. "The fellow that killed my dog!"

In two bounds Puig crossed the pavement and had the tall man by the ears. Women screamed. A crowd came running to gather and push and question and follow a fight that rolled along the gutter. Uniforms of the police colored the general grayness of the tumult.

"I don't care!" whooped a voice presently from under a wall of legs. "Go on! I spoilt his looks, I spoilt his collars and things!" It choked, but burst out anew. "He killed my dog, and I —— Take me, go on, take me! I don't care!"

"Let Me Tell Your Fortune. You Shall Make Me Something Finer Than That, a Hundred Times!"

The voice was borne away on the stream of the crowd. Lost to view, but chanting in praise of destiny, Puig vanished toward whatever dungeon might be foreordained.

His water cart stood flooding the pavement; and beside it Jackdabos grew aware that he was left alone in the world with something heavy.

Under his arm he carried Puig's legacy, the Trojan plate.

XV

A BLAMELESS old man, a white-haired major-domo whose only sin it was to wear long forked whiskers and a Pecksniff collar, sat in a quiet corner of the Villa Pervinca and read his own pet journal. He read peacefully. There were guests in the house, and guests were rare nowadays; but these, although they had thrown him into a heat by coming suddenly, gave little or no trouble. A young gentleman with his leg broken; a charming young lady, whose dark-blue eyes did not overlook the merits of a major-domo; it was easy to live under the same roof with them, to maintain the settled calm of the household.

A bell rang.

"Tish!" The old man lost the point of a lively paragraph. "That front door again! Ah, yes, there was to be a caller." He folded his paper, smoothed his black coat, and went with pontifical meekness to open the door.

A very alert young gentleman stood on the doorstep.

"Ah, monsieur le vicomte," murmured the old man vaguely. "The ladies are in the garden, sir."

His memory had failed of late, and caused him perplexity, but perhaps the young gentleman would take no offense, even though the title were inadequate and wrong. Fluttering with pleasant agitation he led the caller through the sunny hallway to the glass door and the inner garden path.

"I'll find them," said the viscount, smiling, and went down the slope among winding flower borders and tall pine-tree shade. He carried a green baize bag under one arm.

"I ought to have known his face," thought the major-domo. "It is a highly distinguished face."

Thus, altered by fine apparel and an English hat bought with the potter's money, Jackdabos, that Apache who once had burst his way into the villa, wandered freely through a bright, enchanted garden. Green lawns curved under pines and laurels, down toward a limestone parapet which overlooked the sparkling blue of the Ligurian Sea. From somewhere on that sunny verge came a quiet sound of voices. The Jackdaw descended, following the sound and carrying his green baize bag.

Behind the bayonet clusters and fiery-pointed blossoms of an aloe screen, on a high-backed stone bench covered with blue-and-white cushions, sat Ruth and her hostess, bare-headed in the sun.

"Good afternoon," said the Jackdaw.

Both ladies wore white; both were laughing when he arrived; both greeted him kindly and made room on the curved settle. The Princess had at her throat, like a sign of welcome, the little silver brooch, the regala that he had made long ago.

"I have brought you a curious thing to see," declared the Jackdaw when for a time they had talked of passing matters. "A most curious thing."

Loosening the puckered mouth of his new baize bag, he drew out an oval shield of gold, which dazzled the eyes.

"Ah!" sighed Ruth, as though frightened. Her hand touched his by chance, receiving the Trojan plate.

"How lovely!" said the Princess, turning her dark eyes on his face. "You made it? Yes, it is more of your work?"

The Jackdaw's cheeks grew red. His heart melted at this heavenly compliment.

"If it were!" he cried. "Oh, ladies if it only were, I could give it to you."

They bent their heads together over the gleaming field of the legend, and there in the garden sunlight, while the ocean and the dark pine branches breathed unheard mysteries round them, they saw the walls of Troy and dreamed the sorrowful dream of Helen above the gate, yearning for her brothers among the helmeted host.

"Not yours?" said the Princess doubtfully.

Jackdabos would have died for her.

"It's Benvenuto's," he replied. "I will tell you."

They listened to the story like people transported beyond the bounds of the present world.

"It's not mine," he concluded. "Not mine in any sense. Who could own such a thing? Tell me." He appealed to them as to old friends, infallible judges. "We dug it up in Goiffon's garden. Should we send it to Goiffon's widow, the lady at Arles who told my fortune?"

"No," answered the Princess thoughtfully. "That would be useless, for I know Madame Goiffon would never accept it. She was too happy in her little garden, and cannot bear reminders."

Jackdabos groaned.

"Then what the dickens to do with it," he declared. "I do not know."

They all gazed down again into the golden myth, and again lived through that moment on the Scæan Gate. The splendor of it, actual no more than spiritual, shone upward on Ruth's face and in her eyes. Jackdabos, close beside her, knew that she was conscious of his thought.

Footsteps came grating the sanded path. The major-domo stood before them, bowing his white head.

"Madam's brother," said he, "is at the house."

The Princess rose quickly from their bench under the aloes.

"I will come back, children," she said in haste.

When she was gone behind the green bayonet leaves Ruth and the Jackdaw sat down together, alone, awkward and constrained. Ruth put the Trojan plate between them, glistening on the blue-and-white cushions. For a time they watched the sea, below their limestone parapet—a

(Continued on Page 42)

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

FOUNDED A.D. 1728

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY BY

THE CURTIS PUBLISHING COMPANY

INDEPENDENCE SQUARE
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, U.S.A.

GEORGE HORACE LORIMER, EDITOR

By Subscription $1.50 the Year. Five Cents the Copy of All Newsdealers in Canada. By Subscription $1.75 the Year. Single Copies, Five Cents.

Foreign Subscriptions: For Countries in the Postal Union. Single Subscriptions, $3.25. Remittances to be Made by International Postal Money Order.

PHILADELPHIA, MAY 27, 1916

Safe, Simple and Cheap

THE man who buys a farm or a town lot receives a more or less voluminous and cryptic document called an abstract of title. Probably seven times out of ten, being unlearned in the law of land titles, he is incapable of judging whether or not the abstract shows a perfect title. He must rely upon the opinion of an attorney or upon the guaranty of a title-insurance company. The attorney may be mistaken. In exceptional cases there may even be flaws in the title that the abstract does not show. In any case the attorney's opinion or the title-insurance company's guaranty costs considerable money.

The first feature about a genuine Torrens System is that it provides a sure, indefeasible title, guaranteed by the state and expressed in a certificate so simple that anybody can understand it.

To describe the system briefly: Title to a given piece of land is examined and found to lie in a certain person. It is then registered in that person's name and a certificate of ownership issued. When that person wishes to transfer the land all he need do is to surrender his certificate, and a new certificate is then issued to the purchaser.

There is no going back of the certificate. No reëxamination of records is necessary. True, claimants to the title whom the records did not show may turn up—for example, a woman who claims to have been a widow of a grantor; persons who claim to have been heirs, and so on. These claims may be valid at law. To provide against them an insurance fund is created. Experience in this country shows that one-tenth of one per cent of the value of property transferred is ample for this fund; that is, when land worth ten thousand dollars is transferred under the Torrens System it contributes ten dollars to the insurance fund.

Claimants such as those referred to above cannot disturb the certificate-holder's title to the land. They cannot even cast a cloud upon it. If their claims are valid they are compensated out of the insurance fund. There is no going back of the certificate.

Experimental Farming

NO DOUBT it is pretty generally known that three-quarters of the country's cotton is produced in five states, where a good many farmers raise little besides cotton. But standardization of agriculture goes much farther than that. Five states—but not the same five in each case—produce ninety per cent of the spring wheat, virtually all the flax, nearly half the corn and oats, a third of the potatoes, nearly a third of the hay, eighty-five per cent of the buckwheat. Broadly speaking, farmers in a given locality rather tend to stick to lines of production that have once proved profitable.

Now a farm, broadly speaking, is a plant in which you can produce pig iron or cut glass, chairs or watches, boots or broadcloth. The possible varieties of production are almost infinite. With a given quantity of land and labor you can turn out hay, or steers, or asparagus, or apples, or butter.

A farm ought to be something of an experiment station. With all the possible variations of production, it is hard to say whether you have struck just the combination that gives the best return for your outlay of soil and work. By settling down to a fixed routine of production you are quite likely to be overlooking some excellent chances unless you have studied and experimented enough to afford reasonable proof that your combination is the best one.

The War Death Rate

ESTIMATES of the number killed in the European war run all the way from four millions to eight millions. The former number would affect the European death rate to a degree which must be considered slight when it is remembered that for twenty-two months Europe has been devoting a great part of her energy to the destruction of life. Even the appalling total of eight millions would make a decidedly smaller difference in the death rate of the belligerent countries than that which exists in normal times between Russia and England.

From August, 1914, to June, 1916, more than seventeen million people would have died in Austria-Hungary, Germany, Russia, France, England, Italy and Belgium if there had been no war. The normal annual death rate of those countries, taken together, is about twenty-three in each thousand. Of the men under arms something like a million would have died since August, 1914, if they had been peacefully employed. The highest estimate of mortalities, in short, would fall considerably short of doubling the normal death rate, and Russia's normal death rate is more than twice that of England and Wales.

Estimates of mortality in battle are only rough guesses. As to mortality among soldiers from exposure, camp diseases, and so on, we have only the general statement that the troops have been maintained in good health. As to war's effect—if any—upon the death rate among noncombatants, we know nothing. Probably, however, Europe's death rate since August, 1914, is less far from the normal than is commonly assumed.

It should be remembered, of course, that war mortality falls upon the most productive members of society—men of sound health, in the prime of life.

Campaign Issues

WE HAVE heard of various issues for the impending presidential campaign. Those most frequently mentioned revolve in one way or another round the general subject of the country's attitude toward war. We have been told from Europe that war nowadays is as much a matter of money as of men; but on that side of the subject we have not, to this writing, heard one solitary peep. So far as we have been able to find out, nobody has even incidentally suggested making an issue of economy—with a national budget system, the Frear Bill to take pork out of waterway improvements, overhauling the Executive Departments on the lines suggested by the Taft Efficiency Commission, and so on.

As contrasted with the sordid nations of Europe, Asia, Africa and Oceanica, we present a lily-white example of pure idealism. We are interested in policies. As to the cost, we do not care a whoop.

Speculating Clerks

THE New York Stock Exchange has amended a rule of some years' standing so that it now forbids any broker who is a member of the Exchange to take or carry a speculative account, or make a speculative transaction, in which a clerk of the Exchange or a clerk of any member of the Exchange, or of a bank, trust company, banker, insurance company, or of any broker dealing in securities, is directly or indirectly interested, unless the written consent of the clerk's employer has been obtained.

This means that in the judgment of the New York Stock Exchange—which ought to know—speculating is very dangerous for persons of small means and, if they occupy positions of trust, may lead to embezzlement.

Clerks and all others who do not fall within the scope of the Exchange's prohibition, and who are troubled with an itch to speculate in stocks or grain, ought to ponder on the significance of that prohibition.

After-War Tariffs

MANY sensible persons in England and France are protesting against the proposal to supplement the war of arms by a war of tariffs. Just now the notion of excluding enemy goods or of putting excessive handicaps on their circulation strikes a popular chord. But we may be quite sure the views of the protestants will prevail comparatively soon after peace is restored.

Every belligerent nation will then want trade as it never wanted trade before. None of them will be long content to forego the possibilities of trade with late enemies. Germany bought nine hundred million dollars' worth of goods yearly from her present enemies; sold them eight hundred million dollars' worth. Both parties profited from that trade. Both will want to restore it. With industries deranged by the war and with taxes greatly increased—the London Economist calculates that interest charges for Germany, France, Russia and England will amount to more than two and a half billion dollars a year by August—nobody will want to forego profits.

True, England, by her exceptional position, has managed to increase her exports quite steadily since the early period of the war, until in March they were only fifteen per cent below 1914; yet there was an enormous trade balance against her. But Russian exports last year were only a quarter of the antebellum figure—her great outlets across the European frontier and by the Black Sea being cut off. Thus, although a debtor country, relying upon an excess of exports over imports to meet her debt charges abroad, she now has a heavy trade balance against her, and her currency is worth only fifty-eight cents on the dollar in New York.

They will all want trade. Economic interests will outweigh sentiment—which has been a chief factor in the advance of civilization.

Useless Argument

NINE times out of ten, to argue with any man on a subject that engages his emotions is to waste breath. His mind is not open to logical persuasion. His emotions first determine his opinion and then prompt his logical faculties to devise plausible defenses for it. In an interesting little book on the Psychology of Insanity, Dr. Bernard Hart observes:

That a man generally knows why he thinks in a certain way and why he does certain things is a widespread and cherished belief of the human race. It is, unfortunately, for the most part, an erroneous one.

There is a thing that psychologists call a "complex." It consists of an idea charged with emotion, and it operates as a sort of colored screen in front of the mind. A man whose emotions are deeply engaged on one side or the other of this war, for example, may think he is reasoning about it. But, in fact, he is incapable of reasoning, because whatever impressions his mind receives in that connection come through his complex and take its color. His logical faculties operate only by way of inventing plausible defenses for the judgments his emotions have already formed. It is impossible to change his position in any respect by reasoning, because reason cannot touch his mind until his emotions have dealt with it and made it conform to their color.

Complexes play an important part in the psychology of insanity, and every expert knows the utter futility of trying to argue an insane person out of any position his complex has determined.

Whenever you find a person with a strong war bias that does not coincide with your own bias, talk to him about baseball or the crops.

Bigger Banks

THERE is still a lot of vague and ignorant hostility to any sort of Big Business—an uneasy and uninformed notion that business ought to be kept as small and separate as possible. As applied to banking, it cropped out in the effort to reduce the Federal Reserve Bank at New York to the smallest obtainable dimensions and in the law against interlocking bank directors.

How little it has actually affected centralization, where the conditions worked in that direction, is shown by the annual report of trust companies in the city of New York. Their deposits at the end of 1915 had risen to two billion dollars, against six hundred millions at the end of 1907. Just before the panic of that year there were fifty trust companies in Manhattan and Brooklyn. There are now only thirty.

The number of institutions has decreased forty per cent; deposits have increased a hundred per cent. Big Business units involve big banking units—however legislators may theorize.

Organization

SPEAKING of the German genius for organization, whose exemplifications have been surprising the world this last year and a half, the Chicago Tribune observes that America has displayed a genius for organization superior to any individual example that can be found in Germany. By way of proof it instances the Standard Oil Company, a world-wide organization of extraordinary efficiency. Many other examples might be cited. But American genius for organization has been directed wholly to private ends. Our government is admittedly ill-organized. The Tribune suggests that American talent for organization be invited to exercise itself for public ends. But the only use the public—so far as government represents it—has had for organizing genius was to call it names and threaten to put it in jail.

So long as merely fighting successful business—instead of trying to bring it into a useful coördination with government—constitutes a considerable part of politics' stock in trade, our ability in the organizing line will probably stick to its private ends.

BEATING THE SUBMARINES

By Oscar King Davis

WEST of Hong-Kong the personal note first appeared in the talk about submarines. Up to that point the interest in their doings and the horror of their work had been quite objective. No one seemed to think of it as directly affecting himself. At the worst it touched only acquaintances or persons known by reputation. But beyond Hong-Kong you come into more direct contact with the war than on the Pacific side. The ships all run through the danger zones, and travel by any of them involves the possibility of unpleasant experiences for yourself as well as for persons in whom you have no immediate interest. The submarine blood pressure goes up perceptibly, and half a dozen times a day you hear recited a complete list of submarine casualties.

This line of conversation takes a slightly more subtle turn at Bombay, where you make your embarkation for what may be the fatal voyage. There you have added to the list of those who have suffered from the German torpedoes in the Mediterranean a lengthening list of those who do not propose to take any chances and are going home the other way. The eastward ships are full of those who are going back across the Pacific and the United States, and who shake their heads wisely and sadly at your folly and temerity in persisting across the Mediterranean.

On the run across from Bombay to Aden, still another element is added to the submarine discussion. Now you get the first benefit of experience; not the experience of actual contact with the subsea destroyers, but that of those who, for one reason or another, are, or ought to be, more or less authorities on the matter. Such, for instance, as captains of merchantmen who have had a little something to do with the government service; or perhaps a naval officer or two, and possibly an army man in the transport corps. All these things are taken at once by the general public to be qualifications of authority and to entitle the possessor to an unusual degree of respectful submission.

At Aden the final consolidation of passengers, mails and other shipments is made for the last leg of the voyage. Here the travelers from Australia, and from Japan and the China side join with those from India in the ship that is to make the run through to London. And now the viewpoint of half the world on the submarine question has opportunity for expression. There is a great comparing of notes and ideas; and if there is an incident in anyone's life that has the least similitude to actual submarine experience, it must be repeated over and over again, in fullest explanation.

Patent Life-Preservers

ALSO, there is a great comparing of equipment. The wise traveler, you find, no longer relies on the life-saving equipment of the ship on which he takes passage. Of course the professional stuff may be good, but he has an idea that he knows of something better. So he buys himself the newest patent vest, or life belt, or preserver, and then goes eagerly among his fellow passengers, trying to find one who has experimented with similar articles and knows, in fact, whether or not they are of use. These life-saving devices are made nowadays in the guise of all sorts of different articles of wearing apparel. You only have to stuff a couple of thicknesses of ordinary cloth with common cotton or wool, or something that you call vegetable fiber, and give it a queer and unpronounceable name, in order to find an immediate and considerable market for it among those who contemplate traveling through the submarine zones.

You see a man walking the deck, made up to look like a cubist sketch of the next century. If you engage him in conversation about the immutability of the infinite it is gold mohurs to brass tacks that within five minutes he has switched to submarines and is dilating enthusiastically upon the superior advantages of the patent undervest he is wearing. It is the greatest invention of the age. True, it may give one a little unusual and puffed-up appearance when wearing it; but consider the peace of mind and the freedom from worry it confers upon its wearer. And it has the tremendous advantage over all other devices intended for similar purposes, that it can be worn at night as well as during the day.

And then it is so simple—nothing in the world but a few layers of wool, cotton or vegetable fiber, carefully padded together with intervening thicknesses of a good, strong waterproof cloth to keep them dry and preserve their buoyancy. It is easy, of course, to have the garment so made as to include a small compartment for biscuit and another for water or brandy, so that the wearer may confidently count on remaining in the water for forty-eight hours, or even longer, without material discomfort, kept warm and supplied with both food and drink, all by his marvelous undervest. A waterproof pocket may also be included for letter of credit and other valuables.

We reached Port Said in the morning, and the word went round the ship that we should start upon the perilous dash across the Mediterranean that evening. There was no doubt among the passengers—or officers, either, for that matter—as to the peril of the trip from Port Said to Marseilles. One after another, three big liners, one of them the sister of the ship we were in, had been sunk in that exact neighborhood only a short time before. The British authorities sent aboard our ship that morning the captain and other survivors of a British merchantman which had been submarined only a hundred and thirty miles off Port Said less than three days before. And the air was full of stories of the great activities of the undersea devils all along the road to Marseilles.

As the ship lay coaling in Port Said, I, being an alien, and therefore not permitted to go ashore, put in a good bit of my time watching a gang of British bluejackets mounting a big naval gun at the stern of our ship. It was a 4.7-inch gun, so mounted that it could be trained far forward on each side and could cover pretty close to two hundred and seventy degrees. Several boxes of shells were placed on the deck beside the gun carriage, ready for immediate service. As soon as the mounting of the gun was completed the watch was set; and from that time on there was not a moment, until the end of the voyage, when the gun was not ready for instant service. I do not know the caliber or power of the guns carried by German and Austrian submarines; but I do know that a British naval 4.7-inch gun is not a thing to be trifled with. I have seen some of them in action, and I do not want to be within several miles of the business end of one of them when it is shooting my way.

It seemed to give the Britishers aboard our ship a good deal of satisfaction to see that big gun prepared for action, and the men standing by, with ammunition ready. The consensus of alien opinion, as far as I was able—being the only alien on board—to analyze it, was that the presence of that gun there made an interesting situation in case any German or Austrian submarine should happen to sight us within business range.

Kidnaped!

Captain and Skipper Exchange Ideas

"NOW," said the red-headed Irish merchant skipper, who had been most interested in the submarine question all the way from Bombay, "if any of those submarines come near enough just watch us '*strafe*' 'em! Lord, I hope we see one! Those boys out there"—indicating the bluejacket crew of the gun—"can shoot all right. They're picked men."

"Right-o!" responded the infantry captain from the Panjab. "Let 'em come on! We'll show 'em what for."

There was a British navy captain in the group. He had seen war service along the Canal and with the Mesopotamian Expedition, and had been in hot fighting up the Tigris. There was a twinkle in his blue eyes as he heard these expressions of confidence in the gunnery of the bluejackets.

"Yes," he said; "they do make good practice, those chaps."

"My word!" put in the skipper, who had been torpedoed less than three days before. "I wish I'd 'a' had her on the old Belle of France. There'd 'a' been one less submarine doing business to-day."

That was about what the British thought concerning the presence of that gun where it was. They did not regard it exactly as a weapon of defense alone. It was pretty prominently in their minds that it might be used for offense as well, and most if not all of them were rather obviously hoping that there would be an opportunity on the voyage for such use of it. Technically, of course, a gun mounted as that one was, at the stern and unable to fire ahead, could hardly be called a weapon of offense. It was placed where its chief service could be rendered only when the ship was running away from whatever danger menaced it.

"You know," said the Irishman with a chuckle, "there were half a dozen or more submarines that were soft enough at the start to come up close to a merchantman and speak her; and they got rammed and sunk for their pains. We '*strafed*' some of them good, that way."

"Well, I wish I'd 'a' had that gun on the Belle of France," repeated the skipper of that luckless merchantman. "I tell you there'd 'a' been one less submarine in the Mediterranean to-day! After he hit us that chap came to the surface right close aboard, and just hung round waiting to see us drown. The Belle listed pretty badly right away after being hit, and we couldn't get all the boats away. One was smashed, too, and so quite a lot of our fellows were in the water. After everything

(Continued on Page 61)

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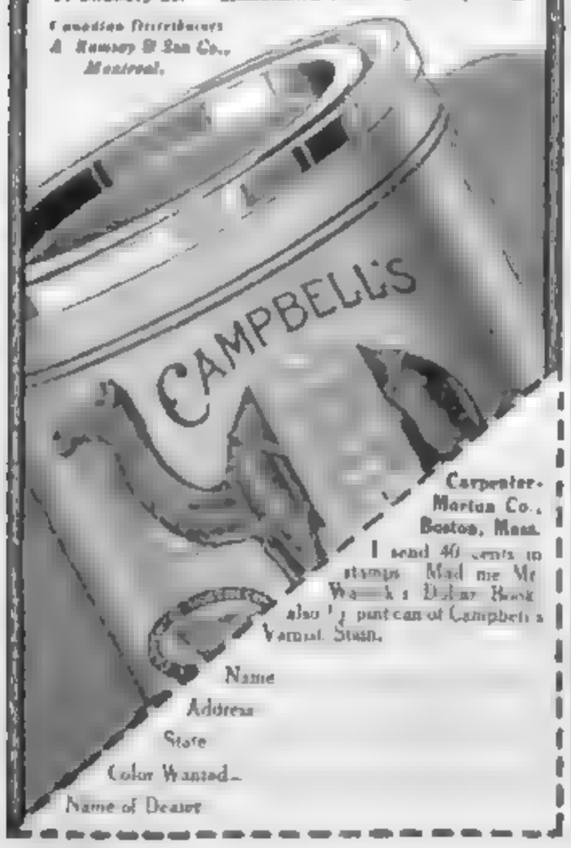

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THE PFLUMPADINK

(Continued from Page 13)

You are a woman who has spent your time looking for luxuries, and tired with them; I am a man who has spent my time, from the day I finished working my way through college, in earning necessities. You are alone in a great, pretentious stone castle on the Hudson, and I am here by your invitation. The advantage is mine—wholly mine—all round. But yet I have nothing to gain and you have a great deal to gain. You will gain experience, Miss Illingworth."

She gasped.

"So few young women of your world, as you call it, have fiber," he said, drawing up one knee and clasping his hands round it. "It is an artificial world and a world of silly artifice. It makes liars."

Marjorie allowed her face to take on an expression, much practiced, which was somewhat too delicate to be called a sneer. She said:

"I assume you have not had the opportunity of knowing such young women."

"At least one," said he, looking squarely into her eyes.

She did not feel capable of looking away, in spite of her instinct to do so.

"I suppose, even if we assume that I have not had this opportunity, as you call it, I would absorb some truth about what you choose to call your kind as contrasted with my kind. I would guess that seldom among your kind would there be found an equal, in any respect—even good sportsmanship—of Mrs. Dole."

"Mrs. Dole!" exclaimed Marjorie. "I didn't know ——" The pflumpadink laughed. "Well, go on!" said the girl coldly, but still with apprehension behind her feeble smile. "Hurry. You evidently wish to tell me what you think of me."

"Why not? Really, why not? I think you are very attractive, Miss Illingworth. It is so pleasant to find a young woman with such glowing health—a health which has triumphed over all the abuse that late hours and fluffy, harmless pleasures, and boredom and high-priced specialists, could give it. I cannot say I think this attractiveness extends to your manners, because I have learned, a little at home and some more on the road, as a salesman with an ambition to learn the steel-wire business, that manners aren't half so much of a gentle-bred attitude toward superiors, which is almost a necessity, as a gentle-bred attitude toward one's inferiors, which is a luxury for a person's good taste. So I assume that your calling a humble bungalow dweller from his sleep for your whimsical amusement is a case of bad manners—a case, at the best, of not knowing any better. It is a part of the newly and the idly rich—a symptom of autointoxication with affluence—a drunkenness of sables, limousines and diamond dog collars."

He sighed.

"I shall not say much about morals. I will spare you. I am sure you are not to be reproached ——"

"How dare you!" she cried fiercely.

"Dare what?" he asked. "I spoke in your favor. And yet I like the flash of your spirit. Those were the first sincere words you have spoken. Of course you lied to me. And you lied to me because you were in fear. They were not brazen, willful lies; they were weak lies—lies of bad sportsmanship. Let it go. I'd rather speak about your mind.

"Manners, morals and mind," he went on, picking up a gold cigarette case and turning it over and over beneath his amused gaze. "How much did this cost?"

She was silent. He weighed it on the palm of one of his strong bronzed hands.

"Five hundred dollars," he said. "We have men in our merchant iron mills who have children and wives, and in a year, counting lay-offs, do not make five hundred dollars. And yet here is five hundred dollars in a trinket dedicated to the coarsening of a healthy young woman's voice and to the deadening of the glad youth in her eyes. Is that immoral? Probably. But I hold you guiltless there, Miss Illingworth. It is the fault of your world. You are ignorant. You do not know any better. It is like your indulging your whim to make a goat of a poor helpless suburbanite like myself. You are not to blame. But, alas, your execution is so bad!"

Marjorie blinked her long lashes. At last she got up and walked across the room.

"Well, you said I was attractive—outside," said she. "Is that all that is left to me?"

He looked at her judicially.

"You are," he admitted, as if trying to give her comfort. "But that does not mean that if I had a son I should want him to marry you, you understand."

"Will you tell me something?" she said wearily. "What kind of life do you lead?"

"Short story," he replied. "This is the ancient bait of getting a man to talk about himself. To use a common phrase—it is old stuff. But here is the scenario: Paid way through college; entered newspaper work, one year and no future; changed to steel business; learned manufacturing steel wire—Worcester, Massachusetts; Allegheny, Pennsylvania. Went on road, learning sales-end detail costs and cost of cocktails. Transferred to credit department last May. Author of Galvanization of Fence Wire; the Mooney Process and Effect Upon Expansion, Torsion and Endurance. Secretary of the Northvale Steel Workers' Cooperative Council; commuter; owner of one bungalow and one encyclopedia in thirty volumes. Train time—inward, seven-twelve; outward, five-forty-three. Candidate, at present, for great biographical volume, Who's Not. Oh—and I always rise at six-forty-three. Six-forty-three! Exactly at six-forty-three!"

"Are you happy?" asked the girl after a moment.

Dole smiled.

"Why not?" he asked. "I'm busy."

"All work and no play?" she asked.

"Nonsense! Life is play. You work over play. I play over work. Did you hear that—an epigram!"

He had walked toward the window and his shadow rested on the white curtain; it was a clearly defined but grotesque caricature of him.

The girl gazed at him, meeting his eyes. Neither moved. No breeze stirred. The house was silent; the world outside, with its moonlight and its peace, was silent.

And this silence was torn into strips by a revolver shot.

The man did not move for a second. The girl did not scream. A shower of window glass fell tinkling down at Dole's feet.

"Missed me!" he said, jumping away from the curtain. "I'm all right. It's you. Oh, I'm so sorry, Miss Illingworth! There was somebody here. Gee! I'm sorry about what I said. Stand up. Stiffen your knees. Keep your nerve. We both need it. Put out that light."

Marjorie shut her lips, from which the color had gone.

"Nerve now!" commanded Dole. "Put out that light, crawl into a corner and keep flat to the floor. He's coming. Flat to the floor now!"

The door of the room was flung open violently; it flew back and crashed against the wall. For a second she could see the outlines of two men, heads lowered, plunging forward. The glimpse was enough to disclose the unkempt appearance of the invaders. The door rebounded and the thrust of some foot shut it with a bang.

"There he is!" came a voice as raucous as the growl of an old mastiff. "Put up your hands!"

No words were returned by Dole. She heard the impact of something hard upon something soft and a roar of rage and pain. A hard object came clattering across the polished wood floor; she groped about with her fingers until she had touched it. It was a revolver!

No sooner had this discovery come through her reaching finger tips than a huge foot, wearing a rubber boot, kicked the weapon away again into a corner.

"He knocked it outta my hand, Jack," growled one of the men, spacing the words for lack of breath. "Ugh!"

There was a sound of blows again, and the grunt that a fist, planted against the body, drives out of the throat of a struggling man.

"Trip him! Trip him!" said a thinner voice.

A fusillade of blows rained down upon a surface which might have been that of a tightly stuffed hair pillow. Groans and imprecations filled the room. A chair was turned over with a crash. Feet stamped about upon the rug with soft thuds; shoes clattered on the hard wood floor. The explosive breathings of men in stress of body sounded above her.

Marjorie's nostrils were dilated and her eyes were staring wide—trying to see.

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She had felt fear, and now, filling her veins as a drug, came the intoxication of the conflict.

She stood crouching in the dark until a chance breeze thrust the window shade slanting out into the room, admitting once more the pale light of the moon; then, for a fleeting second, she could see that Dole had wound an arm about the neck of one figure and with the other was pumping blows at the spot from which issued the incoherent sounds of defeat, pain and impotent anger. The other man was upon the pflumpadink's back, clawing at him with long apelike arms and hands.

Suddenly every matter of importance that the world or life could hold appeared to her to become dependent upon preventing harm from coming to Dole. She jumped forward to the table and her groping hand closed upon the neck of a marble statuette. She threw herself against the struggling human mass and, grasping the marble figure, from instinct rather than judgment, dealt a blow at the top of it.

The effect of this blow was immediate. An exhalation, like the sound of relief given out by a pricked balloon, ended in a sound that one might call a whistle of resignation. A limp mass of something slid down and rolled over onto the fireplace.

"Pull him offir me, Jack!" came the deep and growling voice; but the thinner, higher notes of Jack's voice were not forthcoming in answer.

More blows followed and then a strange gurgling sound from the floor.

"Quit! Lemme go!" groaned the voice. "I gotta—I gotta—listen leggo my windpipe I gotta—wife—and chil—and children!"

Marjorie felt the presence of victory. She turned on the lights.

The room was not in order. The walls and corners had been untouched, but the center of the chamber appeared to have been the scene of a cyclone's visit. Rugs, books, chairs, toilet articles, a Japanese lamp shade and a table cover made a pile of wreckage, at the base of which lay a creature of bulky figure with red hair, a face puffed with the apoplectic fever of his exertion. One of his eyes was closed by external causes. The pflumpadink was sitting astride of him.

On the bricks of the hearth lay a long-limbed young man whom she recognized at once as the driver of the village hack. Beside him was the headless statuette. The man's eyes were closed, but Marjorie felt relief when she saw that his contracted chest rose and fell with his breathing.

"Lemme up!" growled the man beneath Dole, staring out of his one useful eye. "I'm the shereef. I done the mason work on your chimney. Don't you remember me? I'm the shereef. Can't you see?"

"You ought to have mentioned it when you knocked," the pflumpadink said, jumping up. "So you're the sher-eef?"

"Course I be!" the other replied, trying to regain his breath.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself," Dole said. "What kind of a sher-eef are you, who takes revolver shots at a shadow on a curtain? Aren't you ashamed?"

"No—I ain't. I was called by Jessie, the phone girl. She'd listened in. I raised Jack and we come a-hiking. Where's Jack now? He ain't run, has he?"

"Jack? Oh, Jack's gone back to sleep," said the other. "There's Jack on the fireplace. He's coming round now."

"You killed 'im!"

"I was hit with a crowbar," groaned Jack, raising his body until he rested on one angled elbow.

"There's not a word of truth in it," Marjorie protested. "I did it. I hit him with a marble Venus."

"Goddess of Love!" Dole added. "Look, Mr. MacGregor! Miss Illingworth still holds the head and neck of Venus in her gentle hand."

MacGregor sputtered. He puffed out his swollen lips and blew as one who has taken a spoonful of soup too hot to bear upon the tongue. "I place you under arrest, Mr. Dole," he said.

"What for?"

"Resistin' an officer, assault, mayhem. You may laugh on the other side o' your mouth."

Dole smiled. He said:

"Well, so far as I'm concerned, it is all right. But, on Miss Illingworth's account, there will be no arrests made, and no more disturbance or talk made."

"You ain't goin' to resist agin, be you?" MacGregor gasped, retreating toward Jack, who was now quivering on his long legs. "I'll have a warrant out to-morrow. We won't have nobody defyin' the law."

"Well, all right!" said Dole. "I'll go with you now. To-morrow morning we'll tell the story to the village. It will be in the New York papers perhaps. You and your deputy came to take a desperate criminal and were thrashed to a standstill by a commuter—a city 'feller.' I'll go with you, because it will give this county the biggest laugh it ever had. They'll be telling about MacGregor, the brave sher-eef, for a hundred years. When the excursion boats go up the Hudson they will point out your house and roar with laughter. Why, MacGregor, I'll make you famous, old scout!"

"You better not let him do nawthin', pa," drawled Jack. "You better talk to ma about it first, anyhow. He never hurt you none—look at me!"

"He fought me like a wildcat. I never seen the like of it," argued MacGregor. "And where'll I say I got this eye, Mr. Dole? I ask you."

The pflumpadink grinned.

"Huh!" said MacGregor. "Come on, Jack. You ain't a bit of use in a tight place. Come on! Your ma said I was foolish to run for office, anyhow."

"Good night!" Marjorie called out sweetly. "It was so good of you to come!"

Only after the two men had gone did she raise her eyes toward Dole.

"I must go," said he.

"Yes; I know," she answered. "You want to go home and get under the shower bath. It has been strenuous, hasn't it? But wait one minute. I just want to say that you are wrong about me, Mr. Dole. I am not to blame—absolutely!"

"I know—I know. You are a good, brave girl. And as for the rest ——"

She put out her hand.

"You know there are disadvantages about being an Illingworth débutante." She said this with a little break in her voice. "I am so tired of it!"

"I know—I know," he answered in the same comforting tone as before. "Of course you do not know perhaps, but the reason I built that little bungalow there was because that is where the old Dole farm was in 1830. The Dole family was prominent here from the days of the Revolution. Your great-grandfather, who now is known as Alexander the First, began as my grandfather's gardener."

Marjorie gulped. After a moment, however, she smiled pleasantly and said:

"I am proud of that, Mr. Dole."

He glanced up at her quickly.

"When Mrs. Dole comes to the bungalow I want you both to come over and dine with me," she went on.

He smiled an acceptance and then, as if reluctant to take his gaze from her, he backed away to the door.

"Good night!"

Marjorie raised the window curtain. Dawn had come. The gray of morning had faded the silver of the moon. A suffusion of rosy light showed on the horizon beneath the thick trunks of the oaks. The girl, with wet eyes, looked out until she heard a step behind her. It was Martha.

"Are you up, miss?" she said. "I was waked by a noise of some kind. I do believe I'm getting back my hearing."

Marjorie put her lips close to the old woman's ear. "Have you ever seen Mrs. Dole?" she asked.

"Oh, Mrs. Dole?"

"Yes; his wife." She pointed toward the bungalow.

"Poof! That ain't his wife, miss. He ain't got any wife. He built the bungalow for her. That's his mother."

Marjorie sat down suddenly. After a moment she turned her face toward the ceiling and laughed with the pure joy of being alive. She did not even notice that old Martha had raised her hands in horror at the appearance of the room.

The girl reached toward her writing desk and scrawled on a card:

"*Dear old Dad:* I am all over my nervousness. But I shall convalesce here for two or three months if necessary. Please have sent to me Sebastian Quicksilver in our box car—at once. I have a saddle here to fit him. I have found someone to ride with me."

"Now listen, Martha!" she said into the old maid's ear. "Take this, and be sure it is sent to the post office before breakfast. And now help me pull down these curtains. I'm going to sleep twelve hours like a log. And then for the rest of my life I'm going to get up at six-forty-three."

Served at the Shore

Yes it is a fact. Some of the best hotels at our popular shore resorts make it a regular custom to serve

Campbell's Clam Chowder

And they couldn't do better. This delightful chowder is made from fine, fat, juicy clams, fresh from their natural beds.

We cut these tender clams into small inviting tidbits and blend them generously with cubed potatoes, tomatoes and fine herbs in a chowder as pure and invigorating as you ever tasted.

With a supply of this wholesome Campbell "kind" on your pantry shelf, you have the best part of a delicious "shore-dinner" at hand whenever you want it.

Wouldn't it be a good idea to order some from your grocer today?

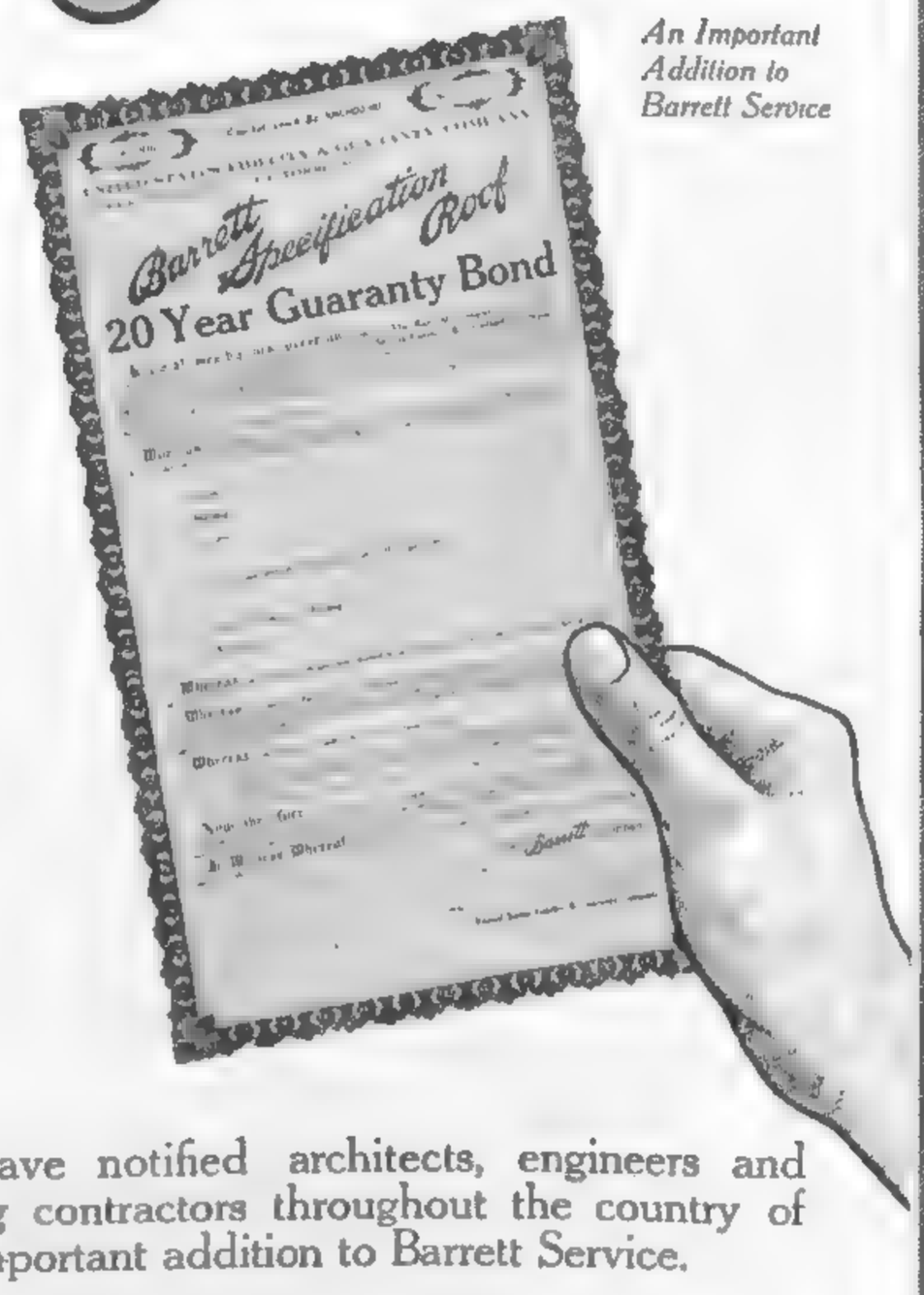
Your money back if not satisfied.

21 kinds **10c a can**

Campbell's SOUPS

LOOK FOR THE RED-AND-WHITE LABEL

Barrett Specification Roofs



An Important Addition to Barrett Service

Facts about our new 20 Year Guaranty Bond

WE are now prepared to give a twenty year Surety Bond Guaranty on every Barrett Specification Roof of fifty squares and over in all towns of the United States and Canada of 25,000 population and more, and *in smaller places where our inspection service is available.*

This Surety Bond will be issued by the United States Fidelity and Guaranty Company of Baltimore and will be furnished by us *without charge.*

Our only requirements are that the roofing contractor shall be approved by us, and that The Barrett Specification, dated May 1, 1916, shall be strictly followed.

We know that if this is done the roof will surely last twenty years and probably much longer.

Obviously, our inspectors will insist upon the proper quantity and quality of materials and the best workmanship being used because, if the roof for any reason goes wrong, *we alone are responsible.*

From the buyer's standpoint, such an arrangement is ideal. He is assured of having an inspector on his roof whose only motive is *to make it as good as possible.*

We have notified architects, engineers and roofing contractors throughout the country of this important addition to Barrett Service.

All you have to do to secure the Guaranty Bond is to give the roofing contractors copies of The Barrett Specification dated May 1, 1916, and tell them to figure on that basis. The Specification of that date includes the twenty year Surety Bond provision.

If you wish any further information regarding this Guaranty, write to our nearest office and the matter will be given prompt attention.

A copy of The Barrett Specification, with roofing diagrams, sent free on request.

New York Chicago Philadelphia
Cleveland Cincinnati Pittsburgh
Kansas City Minneapolis Salt Lake City

The Barrett Company

Largest Manufacturers in the World of Roofing and Roofing Materials

Boston St. Louis
Detroit Birmingham
Seattle Peoria

The Paterson Manufacturing Company, Limited: Montreal Toronto Winnipeg Vancouver St. John, N. B. Halifax, N. S. Sydney, N. S.

THE CALL OF THE CALLIOPE

(Continued from Page 15)

The duties of the circus press agent consist not only in being able to get stories into the papers but frequently to keep out those that might be detrimental to the well-being of the attraction represented by him; and the ingenuity by which the latter is sometimes accomplished is well worth mentioning.

Not so many years ago, and right in the heart of the city of New York, a troupe of elephants stampeded and ran amuck, doing considerable damage. Of course a catastrophe of this kind, if enlarged upon in the public papers, is not only apt to ruin the drawing capacity of the attraction but might be the means of suggesting heavy actions for damages. On the face of it, it seemed impossible to keep an item of this kind out of the metropolitan dailies, because the happening occurred in broad daylight and during the hours when thousands of people crowded the streets; but the press agent, who was, I believe, William H. Thompson, went to work.

He hired a special force of stenographers and dictated lurid and highly colored accounts of the occurrence as fast as they could be turned out. These he sent by special messenger to every paper in town. And then, what do you suppose happened?

"Ha! Ho!" said the editors in chorus and with one accord. "This is strictly a joke and coarse work on the part of Brother Thompson. Let the precious writings be consigned to the wastebasket."

I think I am correct in stating that only one New York paper the next morning contained a few lines of colorless matter.

On another occasion Tom North reached Chicago, beating the big drum in behalf of a tented attraction. He found the editors in a nonreceptive mood and the notices regarding his show were limited to a few lines, and even those were doled out gradually.

The Midgets Create a Disturbance

But North was equal to the emergency. The side show boasted, among other attractions, three midgets—two men and a tiny woman. On the evening of the show's opening one of the midgets, accompanied by the little lady, entered the restaurant of Chicago's most exclusive hostelry. They were both seated in high chairs, and the gentlemanly escort ordered a large bottle of wine. All was merry as a marriage bell until Midget Number Two entered, took a seat at a near-by table and ordered another bottle, scowling the while at his hated rival. After that, disparaging remarks were bandied back and forth until the atmosphere became lurid. Naturally the attention of everyone present was fastened upon this unique scene, and the climax was reached when Midget Number Two threw the contents of his wineglass over the turtledoves.

A battle royal ensued; and when the rival lovers were torn apart from what seemed to be a death grip every patron in the place was in a paroxysm of laughter. The story was too good to be kept out of the papers; and next morning the tale of how the deathly duel for a lady's love was fought between two midgets was spread on the front page of every daily in Chicago. Incidentally North's show got enough publicity to last it through the rest of the engagement.

Someone was asking me the other day what became of the circus press agent when he reformed. Be it said to their credit that most of them go onward and upward. I know the staid president of a New York bank who used to be one of the stars of the business in his early twenties. They become managers of theaters, like James Jay Brady, or they direct enterprises of consequence in the world of commerce; and the ex-circus agent never forgets his early training or the experiences that form such a valuable asset when applied to affairs entirely outside the ken of the circus.

About the middle of the month of February, when we had our arrangements for the coming season almost completed, my partner received by mail one morning a long official-looking envelope. He opened it and perused its contents gravely; then thrust the documents it contained deep in his pockets. After pacing restlessly up and down for a few moments, he suddenly stopped and confronted me, while his ingenuous countenance displayed varying emotions.

"Any bad news?" I interrogated.

"Yep an' no," he replied shortly. "I ain't just figured it out yet, because it's hard to get used to it without havin' a key to th' situation. You'll laugh when you hear it: A distant relative I hardly ever heard of—at least, not since I left home—has died an' left me nearly a hundred thousand dollars. Can you give it a name, kid?"

I hastened to tender my congratulations; but my partner waved me off.

"You're breakin' through th' barrier before th' rest of th' field have got to th' post at all," he warned. "I ain't so sure that it's an occasion for congratulation, an' I'm just doubtin' in my own mind as to whether we both hadn't better sit down an' shed bitter tears. Here we are, with a runnin' start, an' nobody to thank for it, when along comes this windfall, which might be th' ruination of us. I always thought," concluded Morse with conviction, "that money you don't have to hustle for ain't worth a cent on the dollar; an' half th' spice in life is when you have to figure how to get th' show to one town, an' then move it so as to be in time for th' parade in th' next."

Morse's Mystery Solved

The notification of my partner's sudden accession of wealth necessitated his going to Chicago and spending several weeks in settling up the affairs of the estate. When he returned he was loaded to the guards with all sorts and conditions of new projects for the enlargement of the circus. He had purchased ten extra cars, bought an outfit of wagons and a small menagerie, besides several head of baggage stock. We were now going to have three rings and two stages, emulating the big shows as nearly as the possibilities of our paraphernalia would permit.

He also told me he had signed up several new acts; but regarding some of them he was mysterious, and I, on my part, did not question him closely, because the thousand and one things necessary to the reorganization of the show were taking all my attention.

This continued up to within a week before the date set for our opening and nearly all those under contract had arrived. But one morning, as Morse and I were walking out to winter quarters, I noticed a horse car standing by the chute where the animals were usually unloaded.

I made mention of the fact, but my partner did not appear at all surprised; still, he vouchsafed no information on the subject until we reached winter quarters. Outside the little room that we called an office, Morse wheeled about suddenly and confronted me.

"Jimmy," said he, "I think there's some folks inside that might want to sign up for th' comin' season. I'm goin' to be busy out round a whole lot, an' I guess you'd better go in and talk to 'em."

He left me alone and hurried away. All unsuspectingly I opened the door; and as I did so I almost collapsed with sheer astonishment—for there stood Irene.

It doesn't matter particularly to anyone regarding the details of the subsequent happenings. For the life of me I cannot remember exactly just what I said or what Irene's replies were; and I am not aware that anyone else ever kept a true and faithful record of an occurrence of this kind. But I do know that shortly afterward I walked out of the little cubby hole the happiest young circus owner on the face of the globe, and sought out my partner quickly to thank him for all his kindness and consideration.

"Forget it, Jimmy; an' don't you ever mention it again!" quoth he with assumed nonchalance as he turned a deaf ear to my protestations of gratitude and good will. "My name ain't Cupid; but sometimes an outsider can do a whole lot on a pinch; an' if I have made a home run it's all right with me. Just let me know when th' happy event is goin' to be pulled off an' I'll doll up an' be best man, or whatever they call it."

After that Irene came out and sat with us while we talked about many things, especially of our early days and the struggles attending them.

"I suppose nothing will keep us out of New York now," I hazarded. "This will be the realization of your dream, won't it, Frank?"

"A Blue Bird for Happiness"

Something of the sky and air, as the blue birds wing their way across it, is caught upon the cover of this new Whitman's spring-time package. The Dresden box is white as a billowy cloud. The birds are hand-painted upon it. No lettering is visible. It would be a dull eye, indeed, that would not respond to this lightsome picture with a little thrill of gladness.

No name is so rich in the promise of good candy as Whitman's. And in this package, Whitman's is to be tasted in most delectable form. You have your choice of chocolates or confections—in either event you are certain of a "right royal feast for your tongue."

One dollar and twenty-five cents the pound, in one, two or three pound boxes. A Whitman's Agent (usually the leading drug store) near you will have this package. If he has not, send us your order with directions for forwarding.

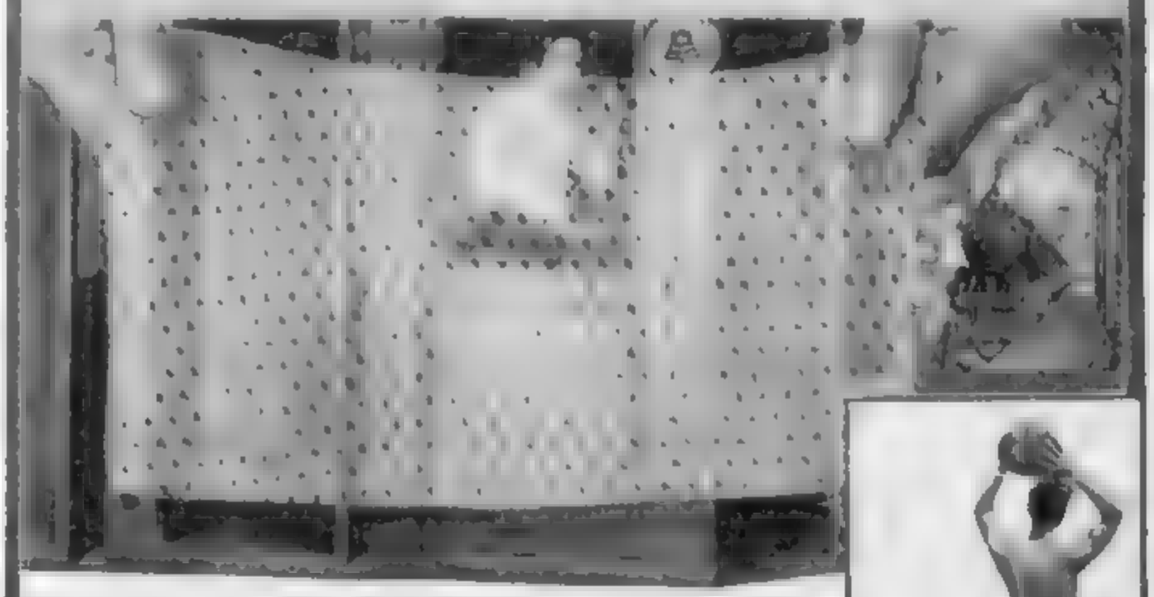
Ask the Agent or us for our book: "Whitman's for Every Occasion."

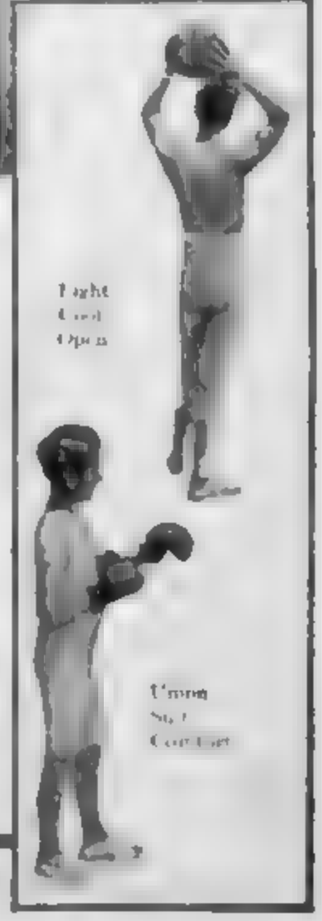
STEPHEN F. WHITMAN & SON, Inc., Philadelphia, U. S. A.

Makers of Whitman's Instantaneous Chocolate, Cocoa and Marshmallow Whip.

CHALMERS "Porosknit" UNDERWEAR

"Lets the Body Breathe"





He's Not a Bit Hot!

Even when others swelter, the man or boy who wears Chalmers "Porosknit" is pretty comfortable. Underwear so open that you can see through it (note picture) must be cool.

Just the right number of "holes" (which let your body breathe and permit perspiration to evaporate) are surrounded by just the right amount of fine, elastic fabric (which keeps the outer clothing from the body and absorbs moisture).

With Chalmers "Porosknit" Union Suits there can be no "short-waisted" feeling. The Closed Crotch is elastic, therefore does not cut in the crotch. It is comfortable, fits, cannot gape open nor bulge. Demand the genuine—label shown below.

Also Makers of Chalmers Spring Needle Ribbed Underwear for Fall and Winter

CHALMERS KNITTING CO., Amsterdam, N. Y.

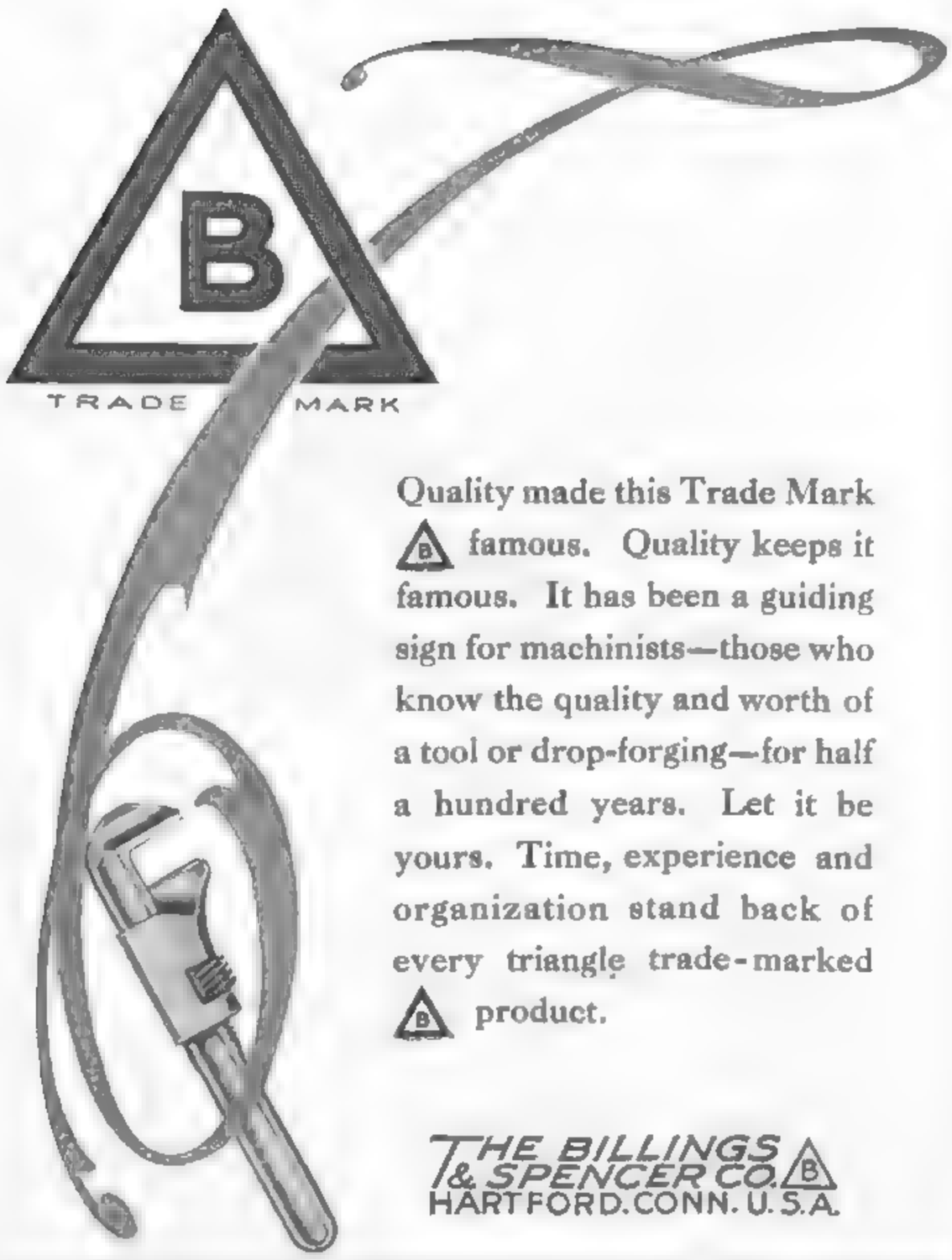
CHALMERS TRADE MARK "Porosknit" UNDERWEAR

For Men Any Style Shirts and Drawers per garment 50c — For Boys 25c

UNION SUITS Any Style $1.00 — 50c

Write for Handsome Book of All Styles

This Label on Every Garment



Quality made this Trade Mark (B) famous. Quality keeps it famous. It has been a guiding sign for machinists—those who know the quality and worth of a tool or drop-forging—for half a hundred years. Let it be yours. Time, experience and organization stand back of every triangle trade-marked (B) product.

THE BILLINGS & SPENCER CO. (B)
HARTFORD. CONN. U.S.A.

The Brush
The Box
Pro-phy-lac-tic
The Name
Pro-phy-lac-tic Tooth Brush
"A Clean Tooth Never Decays"
The Reasons why
Brush your Teeth Up and Down
The tooth brush that really cleans between the teeth
Not This Way
The ordinary tooth brush merely brushes the surfaces

"Yep, Jimmy," responded my partner naïvely. "I guess in th' old days I did hurl considerable defiance at th' Great White Way. I sure was hostile; but, if you will be kind enough to remember, that was before money an' me got well acquainted. Shucks! Can't you get th' point?"

I shook my head as I confessed I could not see the drift of the argument advanced.

"Well," resumed Morse oracularly, "th' fact of th' matter is, Jimmy, that Broadway is th' original home of th' hick, an' the one spot on earth where th' stable door is always standin' wide open so's th' Golden Calf can walk right in an' founder himself. It's like th' race track, which is th' place for a *hombre* as ain't got nothin' to lose an' don't carry a gripsack full of moral scruples. If he lasts long enough he might land a lobster or win a bet; an' if he don't he's nothin' out, exceptin' his time. It ain't a happy habitation for a patriot with a promisin' future; but it's th' real stoppin'-off place for a guy that's nursin' a yen to gather garlands as a grillroom gladiator.

"We'll stay out here in th' jungles where we belong, an' where there's lots of room. We won't kid ourselves that we're as big as th' biggest, because we ain't; an' we'll be content to jog along together an' try to build up a reputation among th' folks that know us best for havin' the finest, cleanest, prettiest little show on th' road. Above all, we'll stick to th' traditions. It'll be a circus, first, last and all th' time. Then, if we flivver they's always a ace in th' hole."

Morse paused, pushed his broad-brimmed hat back and assumed his old attitude of prophecy that I had seen so often in the lean days.

"If we was to blow up in th' bushes," he resumed with a comprehensive movement of his long arms—"I'm just supposin' that we did break down somewheres between th' three-quarter pole an' th' wire—why, Broadway won't have moved away, no matter what happens to us! It'll always be there waitin' for a live bird to give a manifestation an' show 'em what a real circus is like."

My partner seemed to have something else on his mind; but it was a moment or two before he gave expression to his thoughts. Then he laid an affectionate hand on my shoulder, and it may have been there was a slight tremor in his voice as he said:

"An' even if that fails—which it might, Jimmy—we'll go down th' road together an' start all over again. It'll always be fifty-fifty between you an' me, Jimmy—an even break all th' way, until th' last dog is shot."

Editor's Note—This is the fourth and last of a series of papers giving the circus reminiscences of Mr. Yates.

For Big Game

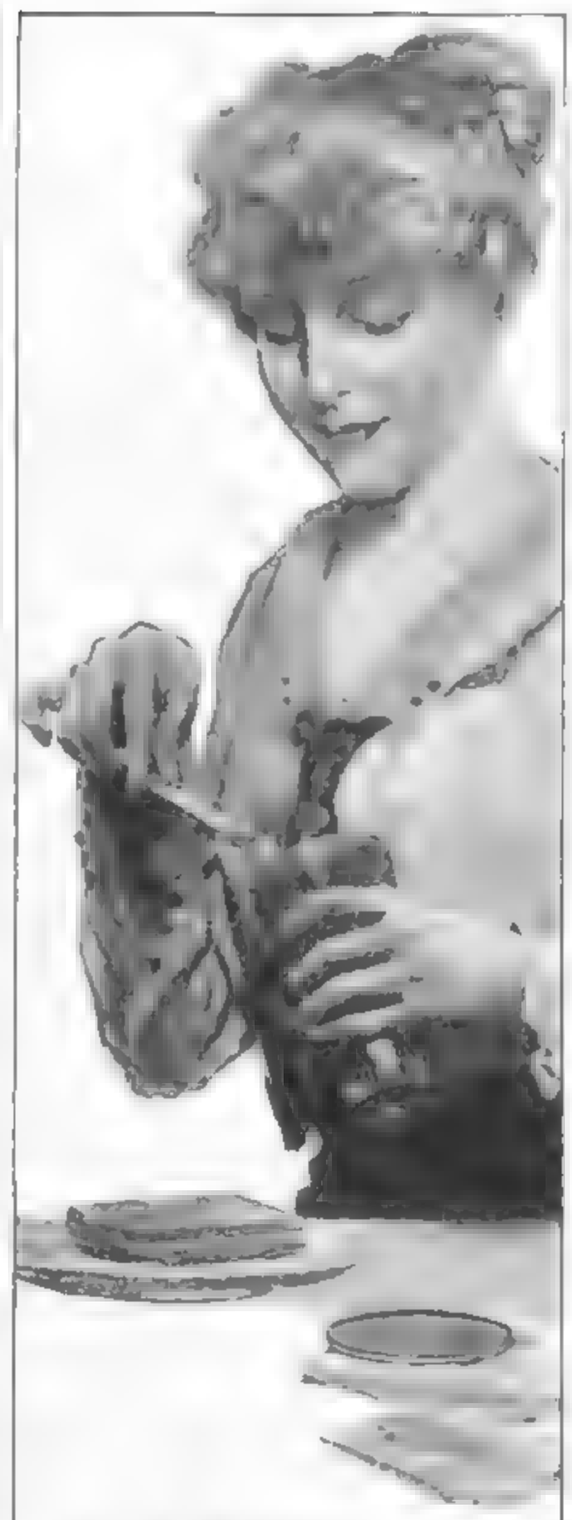
WHAT battery should you take to Africa if you were going on a big-game hunt? That question was asked of a number of men who have hunted in that country. One said he would not be afraid to confine his equipment to one .405 American repeater, ammunition to be soft-nosed.

Ninety per cent of those interrogated said they would by all means have a heavy double-express English rifle for close and dangerous work.

For all game, except the extremely heavy game—such as the elephant, rhino and buffalo—there is probably no better sporting rifle made to-day than our Springfield army weapon, restocked for practical sporting purposes. For the average man, one modern Springfield and one double-express would be battery enough. At the extreme limit these two guns, with the addition of a .405 American repeater, would be all the equipment one would need for an African hunt. Personal preferences would vary this battery in many other cases.

The guns of Speke and Grant and Baker—all those old chaps who used to raise our hair in horror when we were boys—are in the discard now. Before you undertake to rival their feats, learn the general proposition that you must be cool at the test, and that you must have confidence in your gun, must know absolutely what it will do, and with no queer work about it.

In these present days of almost perfect firearms it is a good deal safer to bet on what the gun will do than on what its owner will do in actual big-game conditions. The best combination for either factor, or for both, is that which most closely approximates foolproofness.



HEINZ Peanut Butter

Use it in place of dairy butter, on bread. It is more wholesome and possesses greater food value. It adds a taste that dairy butter cannot give, a sweet, nutty flavor. As Heinz makes it, only selected, cleaned, fresh-roasted, delicately salted peanuts are used.

Children always like it, and it is good for them to eat it, as a spread at meals, for school luncheons, or as a "piece" to eat between meals.

57 VARIETIES

All Heinz goods sold in Canada are made in Canada

LIFE SAVERS

The Candy Mints on Everybody's Tongue

DEALERS
Who do not sell LIFE SAVERS should send the coupon below

The Hole Story

Here's our first advertisement. Our problem has been *to make* LIFE SAVERS fast enough rather than *to sell* them. Two years ago they were unknown, but now it takes a Million-and-a-half little LIFE SAVERS *every day* to keep pace with your desires.

We called them LIFE SAVERS because of their shape.

We *patented the hole*—so that you might never be deceived by inferior imitations.

We made them better and purer than any mints had ever been made before.

We packed them in a novel tin-foil roll so that you could take one and still keep those remaining sweet and clean.

And what happened?

Then came a tidal wave. Every tongue that tasted LIFE SAVERS told ten; ten told a hundred; hundreds told thousands and thousands told millions. The hole with the quality ring had arrived. Even with no advertising, dealers found LIFE SAVERS the fastest selling mint confection they ever handled. Everybody who bought them bought again and again and again. The eye remembered the hole, the tongue the taste.

So now comes this advertisement that you, too, may know the delight of LIFE SAVERS. You'll find them on thousands of counters in the display cartons shown below. A nickel will buy your favorite flavor, Pep-O-mint, Cl-O-ve or Wint-O-green.

But look for the name LIFE SAVERS for, of course, there are inferior imitations.

MINT PRODUCTS COMPANY
545 West 20th Street New York

If your dealer can't supply, send us his name and 15 cents and we will mail postpaid three packages—one of each flavor

DEALER'S COUPON

MINT PRODUCTS COMPANY
545 West 20th Street, New York

Gentlemen:—I do not yet sell LIFE SAVERS. Please send me full details of your selling plan.

My Jobber is

Dealer's Name

Address

There's not a man in America who doesn't need an Accurate Watch

THE trouble is that there seems to be an eternal hope in the breast of every man that he will be lucky enough to get a cheap watch that will keep accurate time. It isn't done.

A really good watch is the finest piece of mechanism known. Its adjustments are so close that there is very little variation in its 157,680,000 beats in a year. The balance will travel 3,732 miles in one year on a single drop of oil. These almost-human workings of a watch are the result of the efforts of the best skilled workmen, who spend months in minutely adjusting and fitting the various parts of the mechanism, and to see that it is so jeweled with the finest precious rubies as to prevent friction and wear on constantly moving parts.

Before you can ever own a truly accurate watch you must make up your mind to pay enough for it. The men you know who carry really reliable watches did not get them for the price of a pair of shoes—they paid the price of a good suit of clothes.

Your jeweler will tell you that this is true. Also, when you buy a high grade watch you are guaranteed against disappointment, not only by the maker but every jeweler cheerfully gives to the buyer of a good watch a lot of service in the way of adjustments, etc., that it would be absurd for him to waste on a poor movement.

In fact no class of dealer in the world gives as much service with a worth-while purchase as the retail jeweler.

How much do you suppose a railroad conductor, engineer or brakeman pays for his watch? Rarely under $25.00. Frequently as high as $75.00.

And these watches are jounced around on trains, subjected to quick changes of heat and cold, shaken up in stops and starts, jolted in "hop offs" and "hop ons"—and still they keep accurate time, year after year. That's because they were good watches to start with. Every two weeks a railroad time inspector checks them up. Occasionally he may move the second hand forward or back just a few seconds, to make their time absolutely correct, but even this is not always necessary.

If the watch refuses to keep time within certain strict standards, it is taken out of service and the railroad man has to buy himself a new one. This seldom happens. Railroad men choose their watches so it won't happen. Now does it signify anything to you that railroad men who buy their own watches, prefer to buy the Hamilton Watch?

The Hamilton is not the only watch accepted for railroad service, by any means. Yet a canvass of any group of railroad men (large enough to strike a national average) will show a majority of them carrying Hamiltons.

When you are sufficiently weary of a watch that won't keep time, and have made up your mind to buy a real timekeeper to carry for the balance of your life, go to your jeweler and tell him so.

Ask him to show you some of his good watches and tell you why they are better.

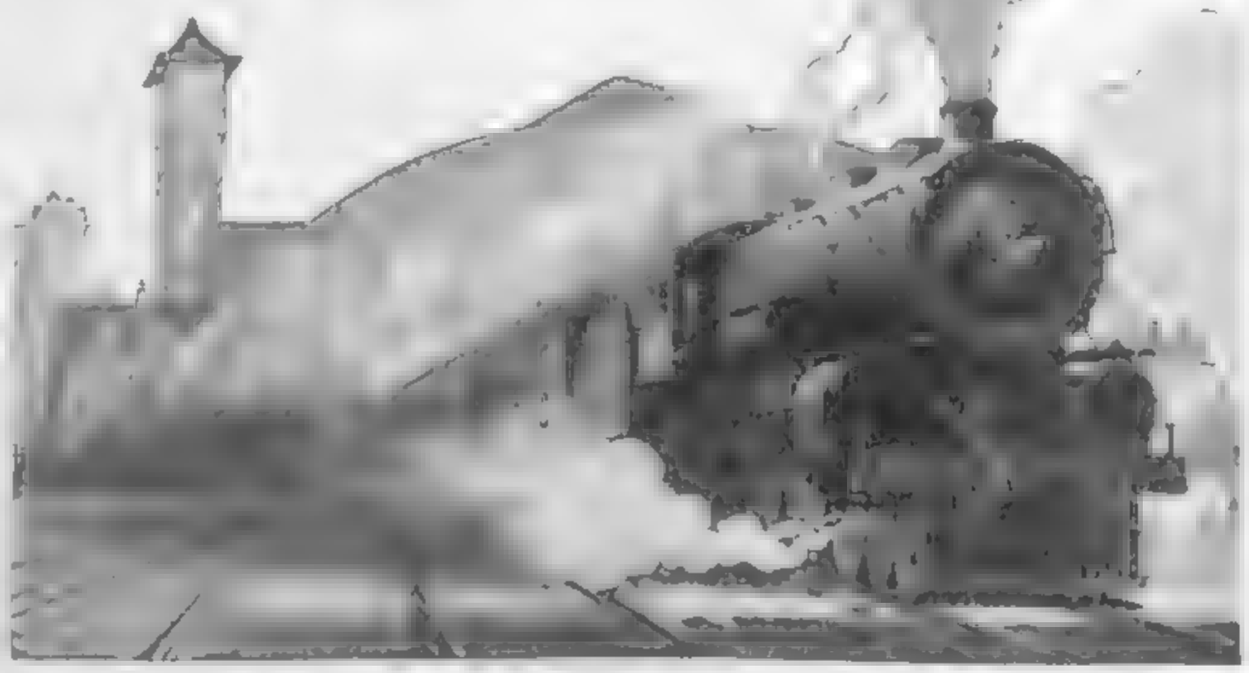
He will show you Hamilton Watches at $25.00, $28.00, $32.50, $40.00, $50.00, $60.00, $70.00 up to $150.00 for the Hamilton Masterpiece in 18k heavy gold case. He can sell you Hamilton movements alone to fit your present watch case for as low as $12.25 ($13.00 in Canada) and they are accurate, guaranteed watches with the price in plain figures on the box.

If you want to know more of the simple logic of buying a good watch

Write for the Hamilton Watch Book
"The Timekeeper"

It shows all Hamilton Models for men and women, explains the meanings of technical watch terms and throws a flood of light on the problem of buying and owning a watch that will really keep accurate time.

HAMILTON WATCH COMPANY
Dept. J Lancaster, Pennsylvania



Hamilton Watch

"The Watch of Railroad Accuracy"

THE GREATEST SPEECH IN HISTORY

(Continued from Page 11)

senatorial customs and with the turns and twists of legislative practice—said that he needed the Pajaritos Dam built, it must be so. And, moreover, it must be urgently so. Wherefore Rallston, who needed Ray's vote and counsel, sought to win over enough votes to pass Ray's bill.

But the others would not hear of it. The idea! This unspeakable Apachian—this Jesse James of the Senate—actually dared to ask for three-quarters of a million! They would see him in a hotter place first! What did Ray take them for, anyway? And what did Senator Rallston mean by suggesting that Senator Ray's bill should be passed? This was no Party Measure; it was Plain Graft. No! And again no!

Not satisfied with vocal emphasis, the graft fighters allowed friendly newspaper correspondents to infer that "considerable opposition had developed" to Senate Bill No. X Y Z, introduced by the senior senator from Apachia. In the last paragraph of their dispatches they opined that the Pajaritos Dam project was dead.

The directors of the Totuma Valley Land and Development Company were greatly perturbed by the published news. Colonel Croffut telephoned to Robert Ray to ask whether young Mr. Ray had seen the newspapers.

"Oh, yes," answered Robert Ray. "The fight is getting hot; but if anybody can win out, it is my father. When I get any real news, favorable or bad, from him, I'll call you up at once and let you know. No use to give up hope before you have to do so. I myself think we have a fair chance. And the only reason I think so is that I know who is fighting for us." He said it in such a way that Colonel Croffut began to think the company was getting off cheap.

On the next day Senator Ray stated—a statesman always "states" to the newspaper men; hence the name—that he had read with surprise, not unmixed with amusement, sundry accounts of alleged opposition to Bill No. 18,886. So far as he knew, there was not any opposition and there had never been any. It was inconceivable that even the opposition party could object to the plan whereby the price of the necessaries of life would be forced down to a level that would enable even a banker to eat beef, bread, eggs, poultry, butter, cheese and canned corn three times a day. The newspapers had been maliciously imposed on.

The correspondents instantly perceived that there was more to Bill 18,886 than appeared on the surface. They had a profound respect for Senator Ray's ability to deliver the goods when he promised to do so. Wherefore the intelligent scribes rushed to the Honorable Stanford Ray's colleagues with wild yarns of threats and insults, in a professionally ethical effort to goad said colleagues into otherwise unattainable veracity. But the Honorable Stanford Ray, who knew his friends, foresaw that such journalistic tactics would be employed and sought out Rallston.

"Jeremiah, I know you did your best. Now you tell those damn fools, before the reporters get to them, that if I don't get my bill through there will be nary a one of theirs ——"

"What do you propose to do, Stanford?"

The Honorable J. Rallston looked serious.

"Just you tell them not to be loquacious before newspaper men, will you? Explain to them out of the abundance of your wisdom that the less a man in public life says, the less crow he will have to eat on the day of the ultimate showdown." And he hurried away to avoid further explanation.

The Honorable J. Rallston, seriously perturbed, sought his colleagues and gave them the advice sent to them by the senior senator from Apachia; whereupon they accused Mr. Rallston of being two-faced. But the senator from Pawtucket denied the accusation very calmly, in order to be really convincing, and gently suggested once more that it would be wise not to give too much importance to the matter in the public prints. His words and his delivery had considerable effect and the correspondents, in their dispatches that night, had to do a little more guessing than usual.

On the next day, at the opening, Senator Ray rose in his seat, quiet, imperturbable, almost placid. He looked at the presiding officer of the most august deliberative assembly in the world. The presiding officer looked another way, having been warned by some of his closest personal friends on the floor to beware of the sinister Apachian and the devilish things they suspected he had up his sleeve.

"I rise to a question of personal privilege," said Senator Ray in a calm but penetrating voice, interrupting a stream of lava from a Georgia volcano.

"The senator from Apachia will state the question."

"I wish to give notice to the Senate that to-morrow at two P. M. I propose to make a few remarks on Bill Number A B C, providing for the admission of Altruria into the Union. The bill has been favorably reported by the Committee on Territories and I wish action taken on it."

The Senate was annoyed. It would have to waste fully five valuable minutes voting solidly against the bill. It was a mean-spirited revenge of Ray's to waste five minutes at the last moment, when every second of time counted.

"I wish the Senate to take action on this bill," pursued Senator Ray with much dignity, "after I shall have made plain to this body and to the country at large, once and for all, my position on this important question!"

As he sat down, there was about his manner, facial expression and entire attitude something which made it plain to all that he was performing his duty. Wise men always look that way after flinging a dynamite bomb; otherwise their deed would savor of assassination instead of political heroism.

A wave of consternation spread over the august assembly. With only forty-eight hours in which to pass two hundred or, at the most, three hundred out of ten thousand indispensable and vital bills, this fiend from Apachia was going to deliver a speech! Even if every moment of the remaining days was utilized, it was humanly impossible to do all that should be done. They would, as usual, set back the hands of the clock. And this brigand from Apachia deliberately and malignantly proposed to reduce the time available for the passage of the absolutely necessary bills.

He would increase the number of unpassed bills and broken hearts by speaking about a Statehood Bill, which everybody knew could not pass even if the leaders had not long ago agreed to let it die inconspicuously. The Republicans knew that Altruria, being Democratic, would add two votes to the opposition in the Senate, as well as give its electoral votes to the wrong candidate; so they had prepared a bill so objectionable to Altrurians and Democrats that, much as they wanted statehood, they bitterly opposed the measure. But Senator Ray, as chairman of the committee that had reported the bill favorably, was entitled to demand action on it and to speak about it as long as he pleased.

Therefore, Democrats and Republicans rushed to J. Rallston and, purple-faced or pallid of mien, as might be, besought him to call off the vindictive hellhound who answered to the name of Ray. If the hellhound carried out his threat, an obese Texan declared, some political fortunes would indubitably be smashed, but Apachia would as indubitably have a vacancy to fill in the Senate of the United States.

The Honorable Jeremiah Rallston shook his head gloomily. He knew Ray, he told his excited colleagues. They retorted bitterly:

"Of course it is easy to see that that blankety-blank cuss counts on your help in this matter, and ——"

"And on yours and on forty-five others. Swearing does no good; neither does a threat to kill him. He is not only brave but worse—he is stubborn! He is too smart for us. We've got to do what he wants or ——"

"I'll be damned if I will!"

"And you'll be damned if you won't," Rallston assured them. "However, some of you might come with me as witnesses of my well-meant but futile efforts."

Together, looking like a delegation appointed to inform a freshly made miner's widow of the fatal explosion, they went to Senator Ray's desk. He was writing away

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Heat—Time—Pressure—these are the three prime factors in the proper vulcanization of rubber.

The Little Red Button on the Premier Automatic Electric Vulcanizer takes care of the *heat* and the *time* for you and the thumbscrews take care of the *pressure*. All *you* have to do is to press the button, and forget it. The Little Red Button will do the rest.

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You won't find it or anything like it on any other vulcanizer. It is the big patented feature of the Premier that makes vulcanizing with this device simple, safe and easy. But it adds nothing to the cost of the Premier. It sells for

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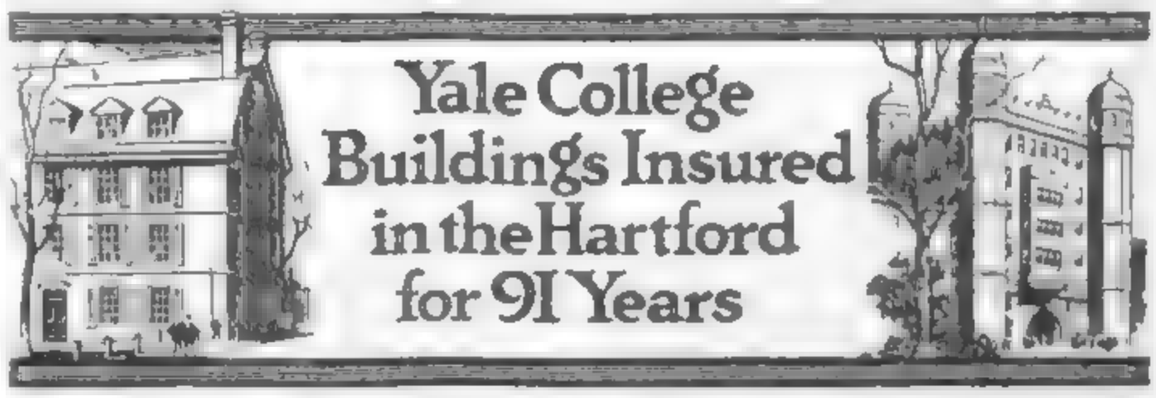

Yale College Buildings Insured in the Hartford for 91 Years

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Check on the coupon below any form of insurance in which you may be interested. Mail it to us and we will send you full information.

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The Stein-Bloch Co.
Wholesale Tailors
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THIS LABEL MARKS THE SMARTEST READY-TO-WEAR CLOTHES

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Smart Clothes

as though his very life depended on finishing ten pages in ten seconds. Rallston said:

"Ray, we want to speak to you."

"Hello, Jerry! I can't spare any time just now. I am writing to my wife. This is the last chance I'll have before the end of the session."

"It will only take a minute," urged Rallston.

"Come on, old fellow!" begged Senator Boggs, Democrat.

"Yes, do, Stanford!" entreated Senator Blackmer.

"Sorry, gentlemen; but I simply must finish this at once. It's a letter to my wife."

And, with that, the Apachian bent over his desk once more and resumed his writing. They saw on his face a smile full of what might have been called a deliberate tenderness. It wasn't a modern statesman writing an explanation to an angry constituent, but an honest American writing to the wife of his youth and the mother of his children.

The unimpressed senators exchanged opinions among themselves in angry whispers.

"When you finish that letter we will ——" began Senator Boggs, whose reelection to the Senate depended on the passage of Bill Number K L M.

"When I shall have finished this letter," interrupted the senator from Apachia with a sort of self-excusing determination, "I am going straight to my house to eat a light supper and go to bed. I need all the rest I can get."

"What in blazes have you done this session to entitle you to feel fatigue?" sarcastically inquired an unwise colleague.

"It's not what I've done, but what I'm going to do, that makes me take a rest now. I'll sleep sixteen or eighteen hours, eat lightly, and then I'll be ready for anything. You know I always"—with an air of imparting state secrets—"go into physical training, as it were, for my more important set speeches."

"I've never heard you deliver a set speech in my life, Stanford," objected Senator Boggs.

"Then you will have that great pleasure to-morrow. It is," he said with the deprecating smile of a modest man, "a very fine speech. It will cover the history of Altruria from prehistoric times. I deal with the conquistadors. I bring it up to this very minute. I incidentally go into the general question of the admission of territories as states, showing wherein I differ radically with the views expressed by the late John Fiske in his lecture on ——"

"If you think you can blackmail us by threats of filibustering," interjected Senator Blackmer hotly, "you have another guess coming."

"Did you say blackmail or Blackmer? Because, though you usually express yourself with felicitous inaccuracy, in this instance there is no doubt that the difference between mail and mer, preceded by the sinister hue of Black, is utterly nonexistent. Now in the carefully prepared speech on Altruria that I propose to deliver ——"

Senator Boggs, who saw his chances of reëlection fade away, gasped.

There would be no opportunity for Bill Number K L M to pass if the Honorable Stanford Ray once began a long speech on the last full day of the session. He bit his lip and turned his head away.

"Never mind, you Bill Boggs," said Ray cheeringly. "We'll make your successor's life one prolonged agony and will find you a place on the Metric System Commission. You know I'd do anything for you, Bill; but I have prepared my speech with so much care! I've spent so many, many months in historical researches, comparisons of documents, collating of dates, investigation of resources, and a strictly nonpartisan analysis of all past opposition, that in justice to myself, to my state, and to poor friendless Altruria, I must deliver my speech, no matter how my feelings may be harrowed by your regrettable retirement from this body, in which you are held in such high esteem, respect, and even affection, William."

He looked so mournfully at Senator Bogga that the latter clenched his fists and was about to retort appositely when the Honorable Jeremiah Rallston asked, in a mildly curious tone:

"And what, may I ask, would induce you to suppress the eloquence that is above party loyalty and personal friendship?"

"It is a great speech—I may say a very great speech! It interests me more than

(Continued on Page 37)

A dandy story is being told and there's lots of fun—for all but one. She can't enjoy the story or the company—a foolish little corn ruins the party for her. If she only had used Blue-jay!—she could have worn her dainty party shoes with comfort, and enjoyed the whole evening.

Corns must give way before the attack of these wonderful, inexpensive little plasters. 91 per cent of all corns go with the first application. The stubborn 9 per cent vanish with the second or third. Other measures are but temporary, and some of them, such as paring with a razor, are positively dangerous. You will enjoy your next party if you use the simple, safe, efficient Blue-jay Corn Plasters.

15 and 25 cents At Druggists

BAUER & BLACK, Chicago and New York
Makers of Surgical Dressings, etc.

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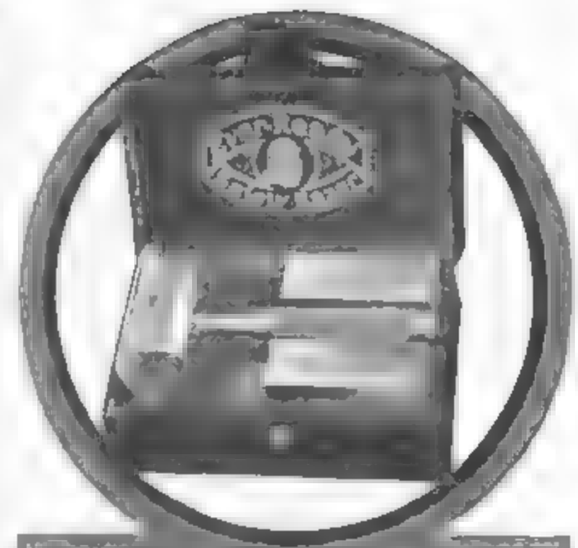

Ever-Ready Safety Razor with 12 Radio Blades $1

The Keen Clean Ever Ready Blade

Radio Blades 6 for 30¢
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The Ever-Ready is *easy* to use, *easy* to clean, *easy* to dry—*easy* to return if not absolutely right.

$1 complete with 12 radio blades—at cutlery, hardware, drug and general stores.
Extra blades 10 for 50c—6 for 30c.

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Satisfaction in a Towel

The demand for a soft, absorbent, sanitary individual towel that dries the hands and face quickly and thoroughly, and leaves the skin refreshed, is now fully realized in ScotTissue Towels.

As originators of the paper towel, we felt responsible for the success of the idea. We knew that, to make it successful, the paper towel must be more than a makeshift substitute. It must be absolutely superior to the fabric towel, which must be discarded because of its repulsive, unsanitary features.

We have always built on a foundation of quality. The production of a towel that would meet your ideas of cleanliness, economy and complete satisfaction has been our aim. We have accepted temporary losses, because we refused to jeopardize the success of the paper towel on the altar of price competition.

We knew that when our aim was achieved, ScotTissue Towels would give you complete satisfaction, because our aim has been a towel that is nothing short of perfection. It is now our privilege to offer such a towel to you—a towel that shatters every grudge you may have had against paper towels in the past, and gives you not only a master *paper towel*, but an improvement over the fabric towel as well.

The new cabinet delivers only one towel at a time, folded, which is the proper way to use absorbent towels to secure complete satisfaction. This fixture is economical for the proprietor—there is no waste.

ScotTissue Towels are easy to buy—your jobber or dealer nearby should recommend them because absorbent ScotTissue Towels contain those qualities which you want. Heads of businesses, hotels, schools, institutions, theatres and municipalities should write our Service Department before deciding on towel service. Send for samples and the booklet: **"Why You Should Install ScotTissue Towels."**

ScotTissue Towels

The Soft, Absorbent, Original Paper Towel

In order to insure cleanliness, ScotTissue Towels are always packed in a dust-proof carton

ScotTissue Towels in folded form for cabinet

ScotTissue Towels are packed in rolls for home use. There are two sizes for ScotTissue Towels that every housewife should know about. Ask for the booklet: **"Why You Should Use ScotTissue Towels in Your Home."**

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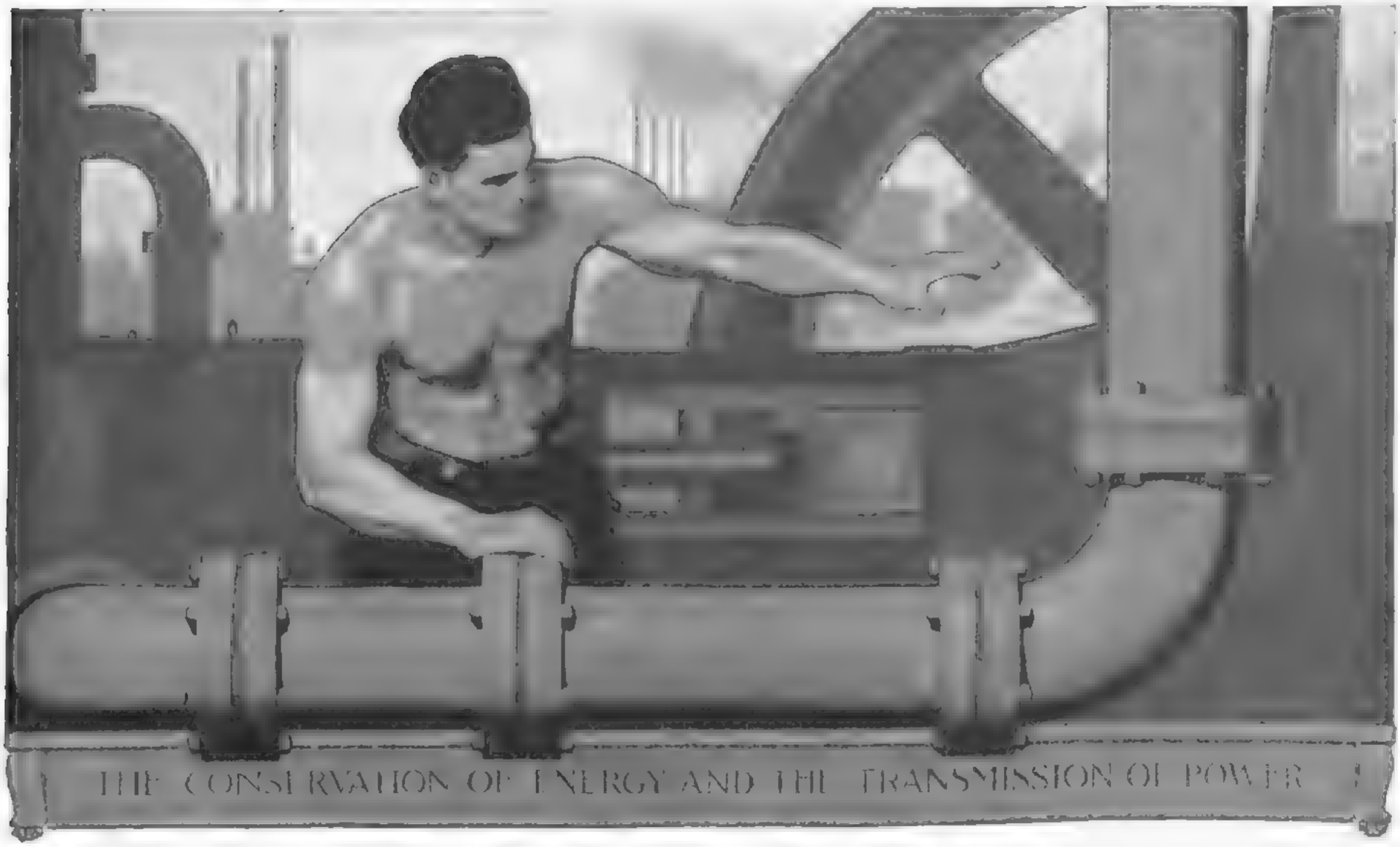

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Goodyearite is asbestos sheet packing—the best we know how to make.

Engineers and experts, from their experience with it and with other packings, call it the best in the world.

They have found that it holds with the strength of a giant against high pressures, and under conditions that make short work of ordinary asbestos sheet.

We want engineers—and plant owners, too—to regard Goodyearite—and Goodyear belting, hose and valves—as factors that assist materially to promote economy and increase efficiency.

That is the industrial watchword, and we make these Goodyear products to help keep operating costs down, and production up, in factory, mill and mine.

Through Goodyearite we want engineers and owners to learn the value of Goodyear quality and Goodyear service, to the end that they shall never think of packing, belting, hose or valves without thinking first of Goodyear.

Engineers buy packing first, to get service for the longest period; second, to avoid frequent replacements, and delays which hold up production; third, to keep renewal and maintenance costs at the lowest level.

We are perfectly safe in saying that Goodyearite best meets these requirements, for it is doing so this minute in thousands of plants.

We are perfectly safe in saying Goodyearite will not char or crumble, for it has withstood 750 degrees of heat for two hours and emerged fit for use, when other gaskets gave way.

We are perfectly safe in saying Goodyearite better resists the ruinous action of oils, acids, ammonia and other alkalis, because its percentage of insoluble materials is very high.

We have tested Goodyearite exhaustively, in service and in the laboratory.

It has shown itself strong, in every way, a balanced packing.

Some packings are good in several situations, but not in others. Goodyearite is reliable, long-lived, and low-cost in any use to which asbestos sheet packing can be put.

In your own plant prove that it is the best packing you have ever had. We will send a sample.

Mill Supply, Hardware and Plumbers' Supplies Dealers and Steam Fitters retail Goodyearite—in sheets 36 x 36 and 36 x 144 inches, in various thicknesses. Or write us and we will see that you are supplied.

Belting—Hose—Valves

Goodyear Blue Streak Belts, Goodyear Hose, and Goodyear Valves have also established their worth in the conservation of energy and the transmission of power.

For main or auxiliary drive conveyor work—for every belting requirement—there is a Goodyear quality belt that will cut maintenance and renewal costs, and keep production up to par. Buy from your Mill Supply Dealer.

For high efficiency and long life—with consistently lowered costs—get Goodyear Hose and Valves from your Mill Supply Dealer.

The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company
AKRON, OHIO

Let Us Present Edgeworth, Mr. Pipe-Smoker

When you have been presented with a sample package of Edgeworth Smoking Tobacco, and have tried it—the chances are you will feel glad to have met Edgeworth.

It is the kind of tobacco that pleases the—we were about to say—particular pipe-smoker, but "pipe-crank" expresses it better if it doesn't give offense.

Men smoke Edgeworth because they like it—not because it's an easy brand to ask for, which it isn't, and not because it is a popular, sold-everywhere, everybody-smokes-it brand.

As a matter of fact, Edgeworth may never be the largest selling pipe tobacco. Most pipe-smokers work up to Edgeworth. Those who do like it, like it so well that there is small chance of their ever smoking any other kind.

If there is any chance at all that you will like Edgeworth, it will cost you nothing to find out.

If you will send us your name and address and the address of the store where you buy most of your tobacco, a sample of Edgeworth Smoking Tobacco will be sent to you.

Better ask us for the sample. If the flavor of Edgeworth appeals to you, you might as well begin to smoke it now as later.

One thing the sample will prove. Edgeworth does not taste just like all other tobaccos.

If you are kind of yearning for the right tobacco, Edgeworth *may* be it. You will know when you have tried the sample.

Edgeworth comes in two forms, Plug Slice and Ready-Rubbed, and is on sale practically everywhere.

Edgeworth Plug Slice is made in compact, rather good-looking rectangular plugs, and cut by thin, keen blades into even slices. Packed in a box you would hardly know that it was cut at all to look at it. One of these slices rubbed up in the hands will just fill the average pipe. Edgeworth Ready-Rubbed is made exactly the same as the Plug Slice, but is rubbed up before packing and comes from the tin ready for the pipe. Please let us know whether you would prefer to sample the Plug Slice or the Ready-Rubbed.

The retail prices of Edgeworth Ready-Rubbed are 10c for pocket-size tin, 50c for large tin, $1.00 for handsome humidor package. Edgeworth Plug Slice is 15c, 25c, 50c and $1.00. Mailed prepaid where no dealer can supply, but except in a few isolated cases all dealers have it.

Write to Larus & Bro. Co., 1 South 21st Street, Richmond, Va. This firm was established in 1877, and besides Edgeworth makes several other brands of smoking tobacco, including the well-known Qboid—granulated plug—a great favorite with smokers for many years.

To Retail Tobacco Merchants—If your jobber cannot supply Edgeworth, Larus & Brother Co. will gladly send you a one or two dozen carton of any size of the Plug Slice or Ready-Rubbed by prepaid parcel post at same price you would pay jobber.

EDGEWORTH
EXTRA HIGH GRADE
SMOKING TOBACCO

(Continued from Page 34)

anything else in this world—except possibly Bill Number X Y Z, providing for the immediate construction of the Pajaritos Dam ——"

"I'll be damned if I'll consent!" said Senator Blackmer hotly.

"Just like you! Always thinking of self!" rebuked the Honorable S. Ray. Then, turning to his Southern colleague, he observed sadly: "Senator Boggs, not your opponent but your friend Blackmer has defeated you."

Instead of being grateful, Senator Boggs said angrily:

"It's too much, Ray. You know we can't do it."

"You're right, Senator Boggs. With your kind permission, I will now retire to my humble abode and there prepare for tomorrow, at two!"

And, to put an end to further remonstrances from his colleagues, Senator Ray tore himself away from their detaining hands. He stopped in his committee room long enough to instruct Lorgan, his private secretary, to communicate to the newspaper correspondents his firm conviction that the Statehood Bill would pass on the last day of the session. He then went home.

Newspaper men sought him there, but he sent down word that he was not available for publication. Brother senators drove up and drove away again with the information that Senator Ray was resting, and had left word that he was not to be disturbed under any circumstances by anyone—not even the President of the United States.

The Associated Press men, whose business it was to print all the facts the Senate did not wish printed, naturally heard of it and the news was out in time for the late afternoon editions. As a result, ninety-odd Conscript Fathers spent an uncomfortable night thinking of the annihilating eloquence to come. They knew that, short of glorious murder or abject surrender, there was no way by which Ray could be prevented from "talking the Appropriation Bill to death."

Senatorial courtesy, which enabled Ray to do it, was the system perfected by a self-constituted political oligarchy in order to remain an oligarchy without a democracy. It did not occur to the perturbed senators to attack the system even if Ray threatened to utilize it against them.

The next day came. Senator Ray, arriving before noon, was met at the entrance to the Senate wing of the Capitol by one of his colleagues, who had been deputed to persuade the Apachian to withdraw his threat; and, that failing, to ascertain positively whether or not it was a bluff.

"Stanford," began Senator Godfrey earnestly, "I sincerely hope ——"

"Thank you, my boy; thank you!" interrupted Senator Ray with cheerful gratitude. "Yes; I am glad to say I am feeling like a two-year-old. Don't be afraid. I've slept sixteen hours. I can keep it up forty-eight."

"But look here, old fellow ——"

"Jim, old pard," interrupted Ray, putting his hand on his colleague's shoulder, "I tell you, confidentially, it will be the Effort of My Life!"

And with that the senior senator from Apachia walked quickly into his committee room and locked the door in Senator Godfrey's face.

He emerged at 1:30 P. M. and stalked majestically into the Senate Chamber, followed by his private secretary and three pages. They carried in their straining arms five annual reports of the United States Geological Survey, eleven bound volumes of the Congressional Record, Bancroft's History, and sundry other works of reference; in all one-tenth of a ton of literature, with slips of yellow paper between the leaves. There were at least three hundred such marks—but no speech!

Observant senators rushed to the leader's desk.

"Look here, Rallston, if Ray merely sends those books up for the clerk to read ——"

"Do you think he is bluffing?" interrupted the senator from Pawtucket.

"Well, you know he's never spoken over two minutes at a clip. He hates it, and we shouldn't be at all surprised if he ——"

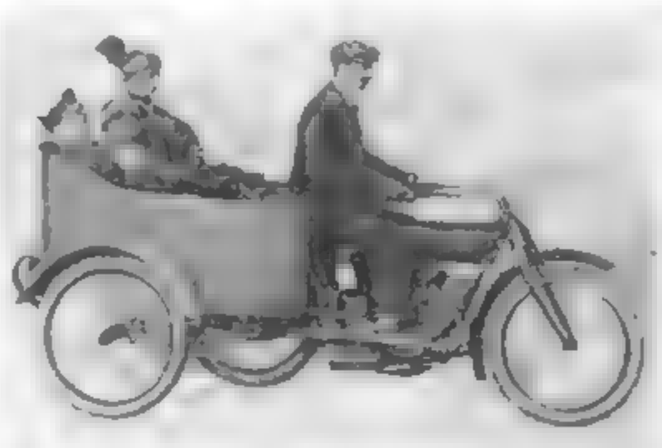
Senator Stanford Ray, the cynosure of all eyes and target of three million maledictions, mostly inaudible, motioned to his laden followers to lay down their burdens on his desk, and looked on approvingly as they built a rampart of books about him. It made his desk look like a barbette and intensified the suggestion of war and pugnacity.

NOW—everybody can motor!

YGNET REAR CAR

A 2-wheeled car leaving both motorcycle wheels intact; exerts only direct, natural pull

At last within *your* reach is the cheaply-operated vehicle you've long wanted. An attractive, roomy small auto car providing for you, wife, kiddies or friends every delight of motoring—with added satisfaction of knowing you can afford it.



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Have you wished but not been quite able to buy a small auto?—here then is the happy solution. Write for full information. Give name of motorcycle dealer.

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Open and [illegible] capacity. All [illegible] auto delivery plus several exclusive advantages. Catalog Free

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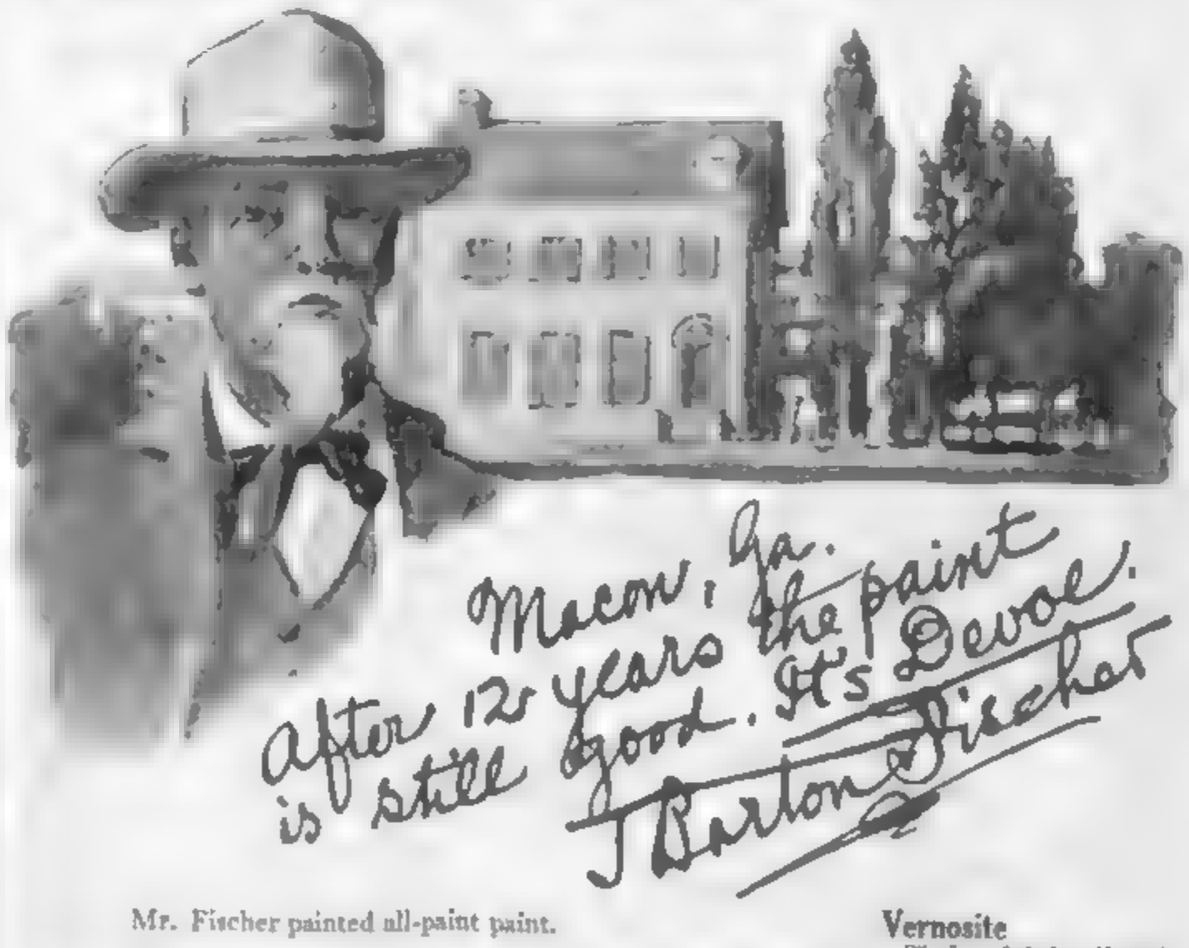
What Motorcycle
Dealer's Name



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The .250-3000 Savage gives a velocity of *three thousand feet per second* to its vicious little soft nose, Spitzer point bullet.

This speed drives the bullet so *hard* that it shoots through half-inch steel at 100 yards, and it paralyzes the biggest, most dangerous animals in their tracks.

This speed drives this bullet so *flat* that you need not raise your sight for 300 yards.

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The beauty of outline and perfection of details and finish of the .250-3000 Savage must be seen to be appreciated.

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SAVAGE

There was no doubt now that the unspeakable brigand intended to last out the time by speaking a few words and then simply send one of the books for the clerk to read while he himself rested or took liquid nourishment as needed.

A hush fell on the Chamber. The public in the galleries did not know what had happened. They simply felt that a tragedy was about to be enacted and they almost ceased to breathe. The drone of the clerk's perfunctory reading took on a disquieting inflection, as though the leather-larynxed reader feared that the Senate might suspect him of being an accomplice. The presiding officer looked on uncomfortably, like a boy waiting for a dose of castor oil without the soda-water disguise.

Alone on the faces in the Press Gallery was there any sign of philosophy—the philosophy that laughs at the ills of life. It was crowded with journalistic hyenas, as one of the senators afterward complained to the Associated Press man, who came to laugh over the corpses of the bills slain at the last moment by Ray's Marathon speech.

Apparently oblivious to the consternation of his colleagues, the senior senator from Apachia impressively took from the drawer of his desk a package of typewritten sheets and laid it on the desk behind the barbette of books. Said package was about four inches high. The senator from Indiana, who sat immediately back of the Apachian, rose on tiptoe in his place and read on the package:

REMARKS BY THE HON. STANFORD RAY
SENATOR FROM APACHIA

There were about two thousand pages! The senator from Indiana threw up both his hands and waved them in visible anguish at his curious colleagues. He fell back limply in his seat. His dear friend from Nebraska, who sat on his left, heard the Indianian mutter, in the voice of a man bidding farewell to his heirs:

"Good for a week!"

Other senators took up the cry:

"He will talk it to death!"

They meant the Appropriation Bill—which was to say, each man's own hope.

Then, as always happened in crises, all the senators looked toward the Honorable Jeremiah Rallston. Political differences were forgotten in the common calamity.

The senator from Pawtucket shrugged his shoulders hopelessly, gazed at the skylight, compressed his lips, and tapped on his desk with his fingers.

Despair filled the Republicans and Democrats alike. They turned to look at the senator from Apachia.

The Honorable Stanford Ray ran his fingers lovingly along the edges of the four inches of speech, like a gambler caressing his cards.

Ninety-three senators followed his motions fascinatedly.

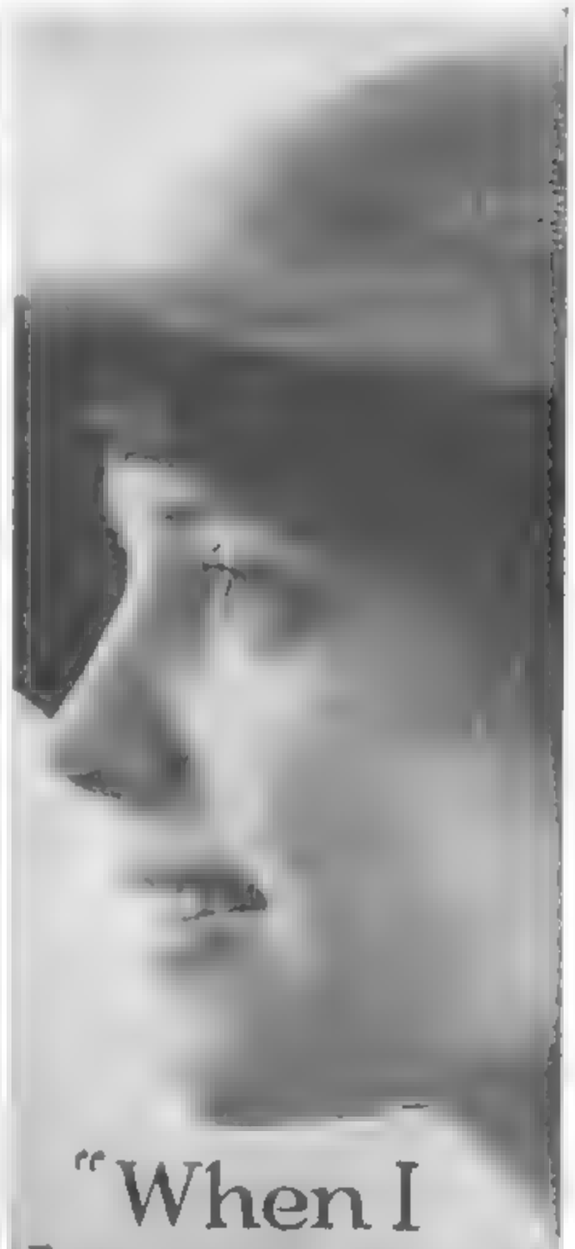
He took about one and a half inches of the uppermost sheets and read what was written on page 423. His lips moved first mechanically, then with enthusiasm. Presently his disengaged left hand began to move oratorically in the air. He nodded to himself approvingly and laid down the sheets; then lifted two and three-quarter inches of paper and read page 735 in silence. He stopped and looked at the yellow bookmarks until he found the one he wanted in the Annual Report of the United States Geological Survey for 1883. He found the place he wanted and then turned over page after page—his colleagues counted twenty-seven and shuddered. He resumed the reading of his own speech, skipping two or three hundred pages at a clip every now and then, but obviously delighted with every sentence in it.

He looked up at the clock. He buttoned his waistcoat, arranged his speech before him, went over all the bookmarks to see whether they were in the proper sequence, cleared his throat two or three times, inflated his chest experimentally, with an effect of testing himself for staying powers and gas supply, tacitly but obviously pronounced himself fit for the vocal Marathon, looked at the clock once more, and rose to his feet.

He was not going to lose one second. Not one shred of his pound of flesh would he fail to exact!

"Mr. President!"

The presiding officer of the Senate looked the other way, as though he had heard nothing. The clerk stopped reading. The people in the galleries looked at each other with frightened eyes.



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I took my dentist's advice about Pebeco. I began to safeguard my teeth before too late.

"When I learned that 'Acid-Mouth' is thought to be the cause of nearly *all* tooth decay and that practically nine out of every ten persons have it, and—further—that

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A distinctive Blue Streak on each side—
These are the identification marks of the Goodyear Guaranteed Blue Streak—the best looking, the most attractive bicycle tire on the market.

It is the one single tube bicycle tire Goodyear makes; and it is built to give you the best possible value for your money.

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Senators rushed to the Honorable J. Rallston and whispered frantically. Then, on a word or two from him, they rushed back to their fellows and began whispering—angry, excited, vehement. Then, on receipt of sullen nods of acquiescence, they flitted on to the next senatorial ear. Same operation; same result.

Finally they rushed back to the leader of the Senate.

"Mis—ter Pres-i-dent!"

Senator Ray's voice was like an Arctic breeze in January, and the words fell like fragments of ice hitting the congealed surface of a pond. The presiding officer was giving a lifelike imitation of a man listening with his very soul—listening to one of the Senate clerks, whose lips were moving by request.

"Mis—ter Pres——"

The Honorable J. Rallston walked quickly to the senator from Apachia and whispered—with neither pleasure nor vindictiveness in his voice:

"Stanford, call up your old bill!"

"Pajaritos!"

The word came from a corner of the Honorable S. Ray's mouth, the face remaining impassive.

"Yes."

"All right!" He nodded amiably, as though he had just been told not to forget the dinner that night. He raised his voice and said for the third time: "Mr. President!"

The President of the Senate looked not at Senator Ray, but at Senator Rallston, who nodded almost imperceptibly. Whereupon the presiding officer turned to the Honorable S. Ray as though he heard that threatening voice for the first time, and in an emotionless tone said:

"The senator from Apachia."

"It is not yet two o'clock. I wish to call for a vote on Senate Bill Number X Y Z, providing for the immediate construction of a dam at Pajaritos, on the Totuma River—incidentally giving notice that I reserve the right to speak on the Statehood Bill as agreed on yesterday."

He sat down. The clerk again read the bill, about two hundred and fifty words a minute. Fortunately it was short.

"All—in—favor—will—say—Aye; contrary—No; the Ayes—have—it!" announced the Vice President of the United States in his usual monotone.

The House of Representatives, duly informed of the situation and being if anything more vitally concerned in the ending of the threatened filibuster than the Senate, passed the bill in record time.

"Stanford, you darned old pirate, you had your way after all!" observed a senator congratulatorily.

"You mean you fellows did!" retorted the senator from Apachia surlily.

"We fellows? Why, you brazen ——"

"Yes; you kept me from delivering the Effort of My Life." And he looked accusingly at his colleagues.

"Look here, Stanford; on the level, just between you and me, was it really a speech or just a—er—just typewritten pages?"

"On the level, my boy, strictly between you and me ——" He paused.

"Yes. Yes."

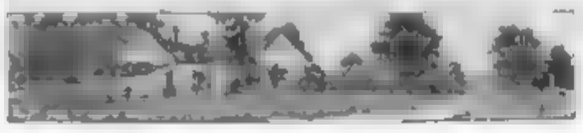
"The honest truth—though I say it who shouldn't—is that it was and still is a wonderful speech! A little long, I admit; but—interesting——"

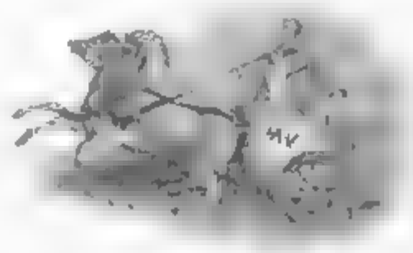
"Let me read a page or two, Stanford, won't you? I've always said you could do it."

"No! No! You'd plagiarize it and use it as your own. Yes, you would! You couldn't help it, Jim. No; I shan't show it to anybody. I hope to deliver it some day when people like you think I'm bluffing. Why, that speech talks itself! Less fatigue to read a thousand pages of mine than two paragraphs of yours. Nothing doing in the show line, my boy!"

A paralytic stroke compelled Senator Ray to retire from public life a few months later, poorer after twenty-four years of service than when he entered it, as all the party organs of his state were careful to point out.

Fortunately his son Robert had made some lucky investments in various parts of the country and was able to keep the wolf from the Ray door. But the undelivered speech remained one of the most effective in the history of the Senate.





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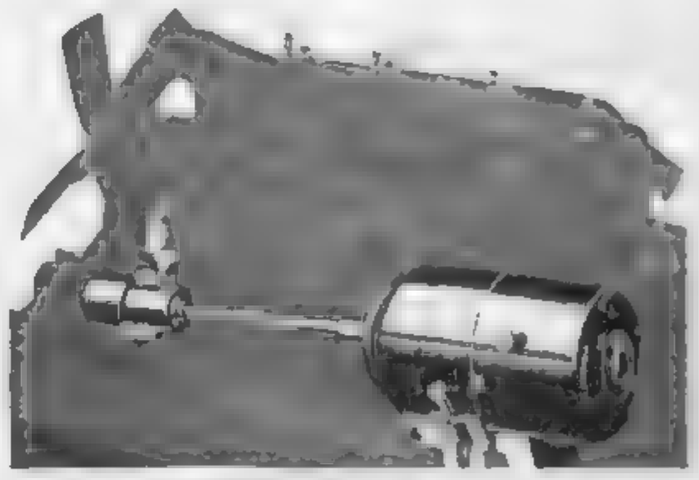

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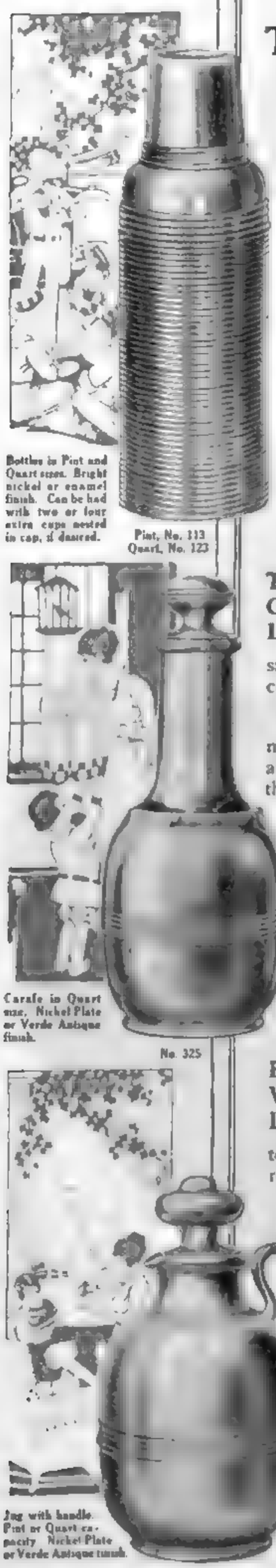

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THE KEY OF THE FIELDS

(Continued from Page 23)

band of azure light broken, far off, by the dark Dog's Head and the low, wavy shadow of Cap Ferrat.

"How," said the girl by and by, "was your fortune to come?"

"My fortune?" Jackdabos wondered at her.

"That the woman in Arles told you."

He remembered then his mention of it, recalled once more a dark lady who lay in a wheeled chair beside a bowl of steering goldfish and foretold her fancies.

"Why," he answered, leaning on his knees, "it was nothing. She said I must follow beauty with eyes open. Beauty would come to me from something old. Yes, from old stones."

Ruth looked toward him, then down at the sea.

"Did it?" she asked, and touched the golden plate.

Jackdabos gave a start and sat upright.

"You, too," said he, "are a sorceress. We dug it up near a Roman ruin." He remained silent. The pines, or the ocean, filled a long interval with sighing. He spoke at last hoarsely: "But the ramparts of Aigues-Mortes are old likewise, and built of stone. I saw you there."

Ruth managed to withdraw her eyes from that blue gulf beyond the garden rim. She found the Jackdaw's face grown pale under its sunburn, his lips quivering.

The Trojan plate lay between them, and flashed like a dividing sword.

"I saw you there," he repeated.

Fear, panic fear of what the next moment might bring to pass, a sense of being hemmed about by mightier spells than any this young conjurer could weave, took hold of her in silence and trembling. Yet these terrors came by no fault of his, nor was the light in his black eyes any false earthly fire. She waited. Whatever he said now would be inevitable, not his own words merely, but the utterance of that meaning which hovered closer and closer round them, as vast and as clear as the sunshine.

It was broken, dispersed for the moment.

A sound of music floated down through the garden over the scarlet aloe points. In the villa someone, with vigorous hand, struck a few rollicking chords that rang from the open windows. Then a voice, a lusty barytone, broke into song. It was the old song of the Ettrick Shepherd:

"My love, she's but a lassie yet,
A lightsome, lovely lassie yet;
It scarce would do
To sit and woo
Down by the stream sae glassy yet."

Jackdabos recoiled in amazement, then sprang upward, one knee on the bench.

"That?" he stammered. "That voice is Barjavel. What is Barjavel doing here?"

Ruth listened. They watched each other, these two children whom the Princess had left alone, while the song drifted over them toward the sea.

"But there's a braw time comin' yet,
When we may gang a-roamin' yet;
And hint wi' glee . . ."

Jackdabos rose from the bench and stood on foot.

"True," he said harshly. "Whoever it is, that's not by chance. And it's true."

Her head was crowned with a brightness greater than Benvenuto's metal. Jackdabos looked down on it as though for a lifetime.

"A man should have a name, at least," he said. "Mine's nothing but a poor joke."

Ruth was up in a flash of indignation.

"It's you!" she cried, facing him, at once angry and overjoyed. "A name? It's what you do! There's nobody like you ——"

He bowed gravely.

"Let me be the woman," she hurried on, "to tell your fortune." She pointed down at the shining picture of Troy. "It is pretty—yes, too pretty, finikin, womanish. Your work must be a man's in every line. You said I couldn't understand men, but I can tell. That?" She cast another motion of contempt on the golden wonder. "You shall make me something finer than that, a hundred times!"

The Jackdaw stared like a man waking.

"Finer? For you?" he whispered. "By the Lord! I'll try."

As if blinded by this idea, he bent down and groped for his hat among the cushions; then he stood handling the brim, twisting the plaited straw back and forth mechanically. "I'll try," he repeated.

"The woman at Arles," continued Ruth—"what did she say?"

He told her briefly.

"Are your eyes open?" said the girl.

"Yes." He laughed proudly. "They are."

"Then follow it with your eyes open," she commanded. "That is what we expect of you."

Jackdabos turned abruptly, walked away down one of the flowering alleys, halted in some hidden part of the garden, and presently came marching back like a soldier.

"Make my good-by to the Princess, please," he begged lightly. "I cannot bear ——" He waited until he could smile. "Don't expect too much. It will be a long day."

"Perhaps," Ruth assented. "A long day."

Avoiding glances, they stood side by side and looked beyond the tops of rosemary and laurel fringing the cliffs, to where the blue gulf moved and shimmered toward them from the tranquil west.

"Light of Earth," said the Jackdaw at last.

No one could have told whom the words were spoken to.

He turned.

Ruth lifted the Trojan plate and thrust it into the green baize bag.

"Here, then."

"Keep it," replied Jackdabos.

"No," she said scornfully. "Am I not to have something better?"

At that they laughed and their eyes met. Neither spoke again. Then the Jackdaw, swinging his bag over his shoulder, wheeled about face and rushed off up the garden hillside. He dared not look behind, but ran across lawns and skipped the flower beds, making directly for the kitchen end of the villa and the servants' gate, where he might slip out unobserved.

From the open windows above the slant pine branches came, as before, the tinkle of a piano, merrily played, and a barytone voice that rolled out the Ettrick Shepherd's song:

"But there's a braw time comin' yet,
When we may gang a-roamin' yet . . ."

Ruth heard it, on her sunny ocean crag under the aloes.

"I wonder," she thought, clasping her hands—weak hands that had no skill in them. "I wonder. Oh, the poor boy! My poor, brave wonder of a boy going alone!"

Jackdabos also heard the promise of the song, while he carefully shut the gate and paused, hesitating, under evergreen shadows in the avenue. He did not see much of that environment. His eyes, indeed, were open, but to another world.

"Maybe," he said. "Maybe."

Something wet had touched his hard, brown cheek.

"Damn, it's not raining!" he grumbled. "And now we know her, by the great horns of Moses, but we can sing like any of them."

Down the road he went, lifting his voice as best he could contrive. It was poor singing and a hackneyed old air:

"Faites, reine immortelle,
Que j'aime la plus belle
Et sois le plus vaillant."

Ruth did not hear that challenge to the world. She sat pondering over the feebleness of womankind.

XVI

THE world, being old and deaf to challenges, went on its way. Cold weather fell during the night, so that when Jackdabos looked from the wheelwright's upper window next morning he saw, beyond young sycamore leaves, all the mountains white with snow, like enormous tents pitched aloft in a sharp, blue, wintry heaven. He needed courage to go down and bathe among the rocks of Gorbio stream. After bathing he was glad to stand by the forge fire and pump a groaning bellows, while his landlord hammered out a pair of trace-chain hooks. "Many a blow," grunted the wheelwright, who was a sturdy, bent old man with a face like that of some humorous gray bear—"many blows to make a man's fortune."

Sparks—long, white-hot, fuzzy stars—spattered from anvil to doorway; the double chiming of iron rang in the darkness.

"I was thinking that very same thing," said the Jackdaw mournfully at his pump handle.

"You? You're too young," rejoined the leather-clad veteran, laughing and smiting. "But remember, son, the blows are better than the fortune. Always."

Fortified with this doctrine and warmed by the work, Jackdabos set forth early to begin his own campaign. It was a brilliant morning, the sunshine that of spring but the air keen as autumn; for the mistral, blowing high overhead, made its passage known by a tingling in the nostrils and a dry clearness of vision. Above glittering palms, bright gardens and mild orangeries, the mountains impended solemnly with pinnacles of snow and torn, bare precipices, cinder-black against a chill sky, desolately blue. Jackdabos walked briskly on a high road behind the town, making for the rocky defiles of Pont Saint Louis and the Italian border.

"Only Barjavel remains," he thought. "I must tell Barjavel my woes."

But when he had crossed the frontier and arrived at that wall among mountain heather over which peeped the rose-colored front and the lemon-tree tops of Goffon's house, he knew his journey was in vain. Shuttered windows, a smokeless chimney, and profound silence declared the place empty. Jackdabos pulled a bell handle in the wall beside the gate. After long waiting he pulled again and yet again. At last came a sound of footsteps inside the garden, a wicket suddenly opened in the gate, and through the round hole peered a little, shrewd, red face like the face of a very old English Punch.

This, thought Jackdabos, must be René the faithful.

"Monsieur Barjavel?"

The eyes of Punch twinkled.

"No," said René. "You have come to the wrong house, my friend."

He was about to slide the wicket shut. Jackdabos hooked one finger over the edge of the hole.

"Your master, then?"

"Not at home."

"Oh!" cried the Jackdaw in despair, and drew bow at a venture. "I'm a friend of his. Tell me: Is he not visiting his sister?"

The little, sharp, watery eyes blinked—once, and no more—but enough to show that the question had hit fairly.

"I cannot say, sir."

Jackdabos withdrew his finger, let the wicket close, for a moment stared at the blank timber of the gate, then turned and went back despondently by the path he had come.

"No use," he told himself, wandering with chin on bosom. "I'm alone. Barjavel's gone. I did know his voice in the garden yesterday. Gone? There never was any Barjavel. He's the Princess' brother; one of the great, merely joking with us for a pastime."

He shrugged his shoulders miserably as he walked.

"Barjavel gone. Puig in jail. And we were like three brothers going to accomplish fine things. Bah! I make you a present of the lot!"

He marched on heavily, across the high bridge into France, down the rocky hills to the sea, and then among the wearisome "trippers" promenading the Midi shore. Suddenly he left this crowded embankment and plunged into the streets of Mentone; for he did not care to pass the donkey stand, or meet Sara, or see a little white ass. Indifferent to all the rest he wandered across town, through the Dragonnière, up over a wooded shoulder of Cap Martin, and so roundabout with lonely thoughts.

The wheelwright's maxim, after all, seemed to point the one way out of his distress. Many blows, nothing but hard blows well struck, would bring a man through to fortune; though here was this Cellini platter, of course, which if cunningly sold would fetch at once more than a lifetime of poor man's earning. Even the gold, melted down ——

Jackdabos halted, overborne by disgust.

"Temptation?" he said to himself. "Temptation? Bah, if I sold it, then, would that be fortune? No, my Jacko, the trouble is inside us. Riches do not improve the inside."

Riches would not serve. He frowned, and scratched the top of his ear.

"I left that green bag," he remembered in dismay, "on the table upstairs. Beelzebub and Hobbididence know who may have stolen it by now! One cannot go properly to work with that damned treasure always lying undigested on the mind. I shall come, like Puig, to a leak box!"

He raised his head and looked about, to see where the consideration of this quandary had led him.

"Must be somewhere near Cabbé Roquebrune."

As a matter of fact, he had strayed into a little depression among the hills, an oval amphitheater of lawn surrounded by olive groves. The clear sunshine of a mistral day poured through the trees, flooded the level green turf, and brightened a host of gay banners, the tricolor, which waved from mast to mast in a woodland circuit. Jackdabos knew the place, even before spying the many whitewashed bars and hurdles encumbering the lawn. It was the place of the Concours Hippique. A few stable boys were leading blanketed horses back and forth under the edge of the trees; and out in the central sunlight a young army officer rode a glossy bay mare that winced over the green like a vain dancer.

"Straighten the jump there, will you?" called the officer.

Jackdabos found that he stood near a hurdle which leaned askew. He ran obediently to lift one end and set it right. With a drumming sound the dainty hoofs charged toward him, and up over the barrier in a greyhound leap flew mare and rider.

"Magnificent!" cried the Jackdaw, forgetting his private griefs in the love of horseflesh. "I give you the prize, monsieur!"

The bay mare returned frivoling at a walk. Her rider, an alert soldier, whose fine, serious countenance was tinged with a clear pallor, nodded his thanks in passing.

"Ah, the pretty filly!" char ted Jackdabos with vicarious pride. "You have there, sir, a very flippant jumper."

The officer smiled at the young man's eager, upturned face. It was a face that knew horses.

"Not bad?" he said. "Here, hold this for me, please."

He unfastened his black cape and whirled it down into the Jackdaw's arms. Then with a hint of the bridle hand he sent the bay mare galloping down the course, skylarking over the bars. When he returned he pulled up for a moment to let Jackdabos and the mare nozzle each other, which they did with great interest and satisfaction. The boy spoke a few words to her in some crooning dialect. She whinnied, and laid her short little racer's head on the brown velveteen shoulder.

"You have bewitched the lady," laughed her rider. "She is no sycophant."

He caught the youngster watching him secretly with an odd, shy glance.

"But I've seen you before," said he.

"Yes, my captain," replied Jackdabos. "In the army."

"Eh?" cried the horseman. "When? Where was it?"

He named an obscure and far-off battlefield.

"Yes, sir," agreed the Jackdaw, and named two others, grinning proudly.

The captain smiled, but with a trace of sadness in his dark eyes, as though this young wanderer's face recalled memories—many things lost and forgotten.

"I know you now," said he. "A very annoying young devil who never stayed in the background."

The Jackdaw modestly touched his cap, for this as it happened was praise

"Eh, well? How goes it, my boy?"

The boy replied that his affairs went in excellent order. But as he made this reply there came an inspiration.

"May I talk with you, sir," he begged, "for ten minutes?"

"Fire away," said his captain.

"Pardon, sir. Later. First I must go and come. There's a very important thing I should like to show you. Highly important."

"Concerning what?"

"Concerning France."

The captain consulted his watch.

"I shall be exercising horses here," he declared, "till lunchtime."

The Jackdaw thanked him warmly, returned the black cape neatly folded, and set off across country like a paper chaser, vaulting one of the hurdles for pure lightheartedness. All the way to the wheelwright's and upstairs he ran; then all the way back uphill, with a heavy green bag thumping his ribs. In the pleasant glade of the Concours Hippique he found his captain still riding the bay mare, though now at an amble, her practice done for the day.

(Continued on Page 46)

Fitall

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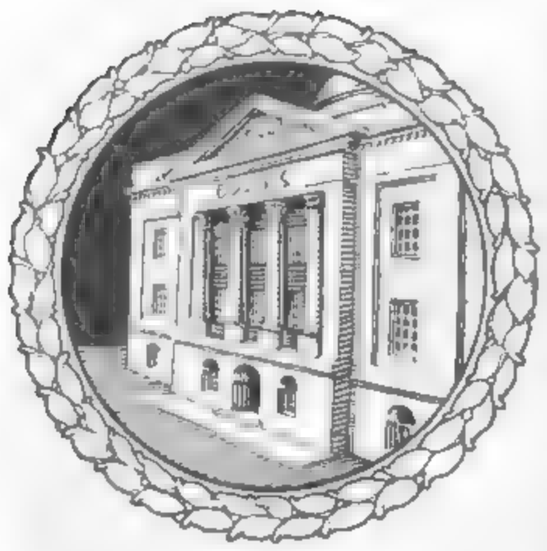

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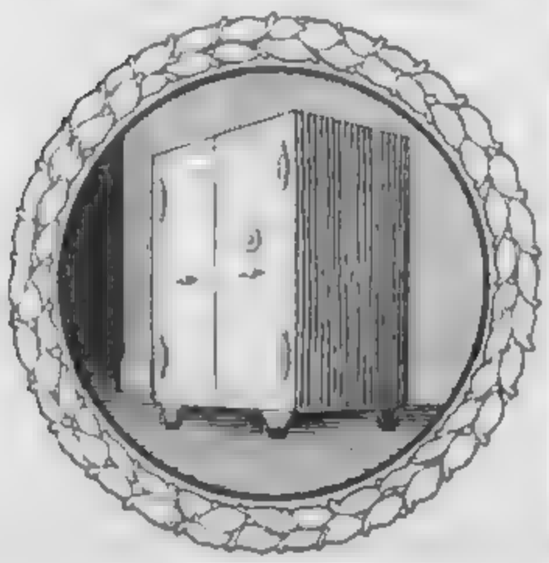

(Continued from Page 43)

They met in the center of the oval.

"Are your lungs made of leather?" asked the horseman, smiling.

"It is nothing," replied Jackdabos, flushed but breathing easily. "I was afraid of missing you, sir."

As a peddler opens his pack he untied the bag strings, fumbled within, and quickly extracted the broad golden plate, dazzling in the sun.

"There," said he, handing it up.

The captain balanced the glorious object on his saddle bow, and stared like one amazed by legerdemain.

"What's all this?"

Leaning against the mare's shoulder, Jackdabos told him.

He sat listening, immobile, an equestrian statue; only his fine dark eyes moved, but they penetrated the young man through and through.

"It sounds very droll; but I'm not lying, sir."

"I know you're not, my child. Continue to avoid that mistake."

Jackdabos continued with spirit and humor.

"It is genuine," he concluded. "A great English scholar told me so. It is no counterfeit. Benvenuto Cellini made it; indeed, who else could dream and execute such a piece?

"Perfect, barring the salamander on Troy gate, which is bad. But perfect!"

The captain, his first moment of surprise past, nodded gravely, like a man who had seen many matters far less credible.

"Odd," he murmured. "A very odd story"

"Sir, you can't imagine," said Jackdabos fervently, "how I have lain awake nights, puzzling. To think of such a prodigy ever being lost—or ever found again. Enigma! The things we lose, the things we keep—enigma of the past! It crushes me, sir."

His captain did not laugh or mock, but eyed him curiously, and then said:

"I know. Charlemagne was a great emperor. Somewhere in Paris—the Bibliothèque, I fancy—there's one poor, little, old, time-eaten ivory chessman which belonged to Charlemagne."

He waited, but not long, for this bright-eyed youngster caught the point almost at once.

"You think like me, sir!" exclaimed the Jackdaw, as if marvelously honored. "Yes. If Charlemagne came back, and saw his one chessman standing there, he would cry: 'What the devil! They kept that little old thing, when I owned such a lot of stuff—me, Charlemagne?'"

The two men smiled, agreeing well. Jackdabos patted the mare's neck, and became lost in a day dream, his gaze fixed on the tricolor banners fluttering brightly round the olive-girdled circus.

"You had some question to ask?"

"Oh, pardon me, sir." The dreamer woke. "I forgot. Your time is not like mine, worthless. May I see our plate once more?"

The captain reached it down. Jackdabos took it in both hands, held it out at arm's length, and, with a gleam of primrose light quivering over his tanned cheeks, fell to such a study of the golden work as though he were storing away the sight of Helen, her brothers, and beleaguered Troy in his mind forever.

"It was made for a French king." He thought aloud. "The kings are gone, but there is always France."

He returned the plate to his captain.

"You know the great and the powerful, sir. Please make them keep this where we others, we short-legged fellows, can see it now and then on a Sunday."

He stepped backward smartly, two paces from the mare's shoulder, touched his cap, turned, and walked off with a little contented swagger across the green turf. He had reached the boundary of the oval before the astonished captain came riding alongside.

"Here, you young madman," fumed the officer, laughing. "Here!"

Respectful but stubborn, the Jackdaw turned his head without halting.

"No use, my captain," he retorted. "The pretty filly can do anything, God bless her, but she hasn't learned to climb these rocks where I'm going. Oh, and here's the bag for it."

Like a brown velveteen goat, he scrambled up the nearest rounding ledge and stood inaccessible on the crest, akimbo and again, ready to vanish into the olive branches.

"Forgive me, sir," he called. "I had no other method. My friends are all gone. I needed a man of honor. It belongs with the toy of Charlemagne."

XVII

AVIGNON, a year later, was enjoying the clearest of spring days. In mild April sunlight the city of the Popes lifted her pale buff towers and crenelated walls along the river, as though rising to see how the pollarded fruit trees blossomed on the island.

Against the lofty balustrade of the popes' garden a large, black-bearded man leaned his elbows, and watched, far below, the tawny Rhone swirling past in freshet. He wore plain black clothes and a generous black felt hat.

"I wonder," said this man, "what the young monkey thinks he's doing?"

He meditated, his big gray eyes fixed on Rhone stream and the low mist of orchard blossoms beyond. One year ago he had lost a friend. This morning he hoped to discover the friend again, if it were possible after so much time and intervening difference.

"Young monkey!" said Blackbeard. "Whatever he is doing, he's proud as Lucifer and twice as independent."

A brooding light in the gray eyes declared that the lost friend, for all his pride and silence, was not a displeasing object of thought. Blackbeard hummed an air, and beat accompanying tattoo on the balustrade. Avignon had waked and breakfasted, but remained very still. The skiff of the ferryman, gliding slantwise across the yellow river, creaked and rattled its pulley along the sagging wire cable with a complaint as of a melancholy bird. When it had landed beneath Blackbeard's rocky eminence, and set ashore its freight of slow-moving peasant women, there was no sound but Rhone's voice. Fierce eddies boiled and gurgled under the arches of the broken bridge, and surged about the last pier in midstream, reflecting bits of glassy brightness, whirling like that round of the vanished dancers whose memory is but an old song. The watcher on the garden rock ceased humming and listened for a while.

"I'll go now," he thought, rousing, "and catch him at work. If he is working?"

So down from the garden cypresses, under the palace battlements, under the Pope's Mule tower, downstairs, past valiant Crillon's statue, and into the lower streets of Avignon, walked a lazy giant with an air of preoccupied benevolence. He smiled to himself as he went.

"Will it be like old times?" he wondered.

Through narrow ways and a crowded market place he came at last into the Street of the Dyers. Where once the scarlet cloth of army trousers used to flaunt was now a sad-colored lane of workshops overhung with budding trees. On his right, in a masonry channel, the olive-gray water of the Sorgue came suddenly and mysteriously flowing from under houses, to turn the cumbrous, clanking, undershot water wheels, their paddles coated with green slime. Like laboring monsters, wheel after wheel revolved patiently, dripping. Across the street their motion was continued, multiplied, accelerated in the row of workshops where through dark doorways came the hum and the fugitive glimmer of belts and pulleys rapidly spinning.

"He must be hereabout," thought Blackbeard, peering through each door as he passed. Men quarreled somewhere with loud and terrible language.

Not far beyond the mournful chapel of the Gray Penitents he spied a yet gloomier portal, from which smoke languidly drifted.

"There!" said the wanderer, quickening his steps. "There, of course; that's the boy's sign!"

Above the smoking lintel projected a small penthouse box, like a wooden lantern, in which hung a bridle of scarlet leather.

"Poor child, I hope it brought him luck!"

To judge by the senses it had not done so. Here the quarrel raged. The shop, blacker than an oven, was filled with stale, acrid foundry smoke and reëchoed yells of rage. As Blackbeard gained the threshold he was thrown violently backward by two interlocked and reeling figures, who were belched out as from an inferno. In a zigzag stumble they crossed the road, struck headfirst the wall of the brook, fell in a hissing, cat-fighting mass, then disentangled, bounded up, and sprang at each other with fists and feet.

They were short men, evenly matched; but the good-natured giant, lumbering into the fray, tore them apart.

"No, no!" cried one. "Let be! This must come to an end."

"Stand clear!" howled the other. "Let me kill him!"

"Do it! Do it!"

"He stole my great treasure—gave it away—for nothing. Promised to make my fortune, and he can't make a sow's earring!"

The two ruffians bobbed round their peacemaker, trying frantically to close again. Pale, sweaty, grimed like stokers, with blouses tattered and burnt, they seemed a pair of last night's phantoms enacting by sunshine the fag-end of a dream.

Along the Street of the Dyers neighboring workmen leaned in their doorways to watch and disapprove, or popped out, shrugged their shoulders, and popped in again.

"Let me kill him!"

"Out o' my way!"

The giant recognized both ragamuffins despite their blackened faces.

"Why, Jacko!" he cried. "Philibert! Stop this at once. Calm yourselves."

The blacker and worse burnt of the two flashed on him a beseeching look.

"One moment, Barjavel," came the reply in the Jackdaw's voice. "No time for you now. This has been coming. He blames me for the failure of my statue. A year's work. This is the fight. Stand clear. We must finish on the spot."

So saying, he dodged under the giant's arm and flew at his enemy like a gamecock. This time Barjavel contented himself with seeing fair play. It was a combat great and grim, fought in silence. They hammered each other with savage good will, clenched, toppled exhausted, rolled on the cobblestones, got up and hammered afresh. When they fell for the last time it was the wild, smeared likeness of Jackdabos who wriggled on top and sat there.

"Had enough?" he panted. "Or shall I drop you into the Sorgue?"

"Lemme up," croaked a dismal bass.

The dirty victor leaped on foot.

"Sorry, old man," he muttered, "but we had to maul it out."

The vanquished rose tottering and wiped a pug nose that bled.

"I quit work," said Puig. "Hope I never see your face again."

And he went limping back into the cavern of smoke.

Jackdabos, or the torn and cindery devil in his likeness, drew himself erect and wearily filled his chest with air.

"You are welcome," he said, smiling. "Welcome, *monsieur le prince* ——"

"Bah!" protested the giant, and wrung his hand. "Call me the old name!"

The youngster sighed with content.

"My dear Barjavel, it's very good to see your face again. What can we do for you?"

Barjavel's big gray eyes twinkled with satisfaction. Here he had found the same old Jackdaw, nobody's darling, no man's protégé, poor, simple, yet ready to talk like a ruler of grand affairs.

"I came to renew our friendship a little," replied Barjavel, "if you care to try. I wanted to ask you both to come picnic with me on the island."

Jackdabos gave a snort of contempt.

"If we care? What do you take us for, Barjy? Half a mo'."

He plunged into the shop and disappeared among greenish clouds of evil-smelling smoke. Barjavel, peering in, could see only an obscure wilderness of tools, boxes, heaps of sand, disorderly work benches, dominated by the dome of a brick furnace and a huge, misshapen mass, like a badly built ant hill propped with scaffolding. The place was a fit grotto for Melancholia surrounded by her rubbish.

Jackdabos ran out buttoning his jacket—the same old brown velveteen, threadbare now, though neatly patched and brushed. Except that one eyelid was turning green and puffy he bore no marks of conflict; and certainly no grudge, for his face was jubilant.

"Ready for picnics," he declared. "We haven't eaten or slept, no, not these forty-eight hours. Wow, Barjy, but we have worked!"

Blackbeard pointed at the uncouth ant hill amid the reek.

"What on earth is that?"

The Jackdaw flung his hands apart in a gesture of defeat.

"That? My statue," said he lightly. "My bronze statue in its mold. A year's work for nothing. We cast it as well as we could. Puigo says the alloy didn't fuse properly. All we could get for a furnace

(Continued on Page 49)

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It is *low*—easy to load and unload.

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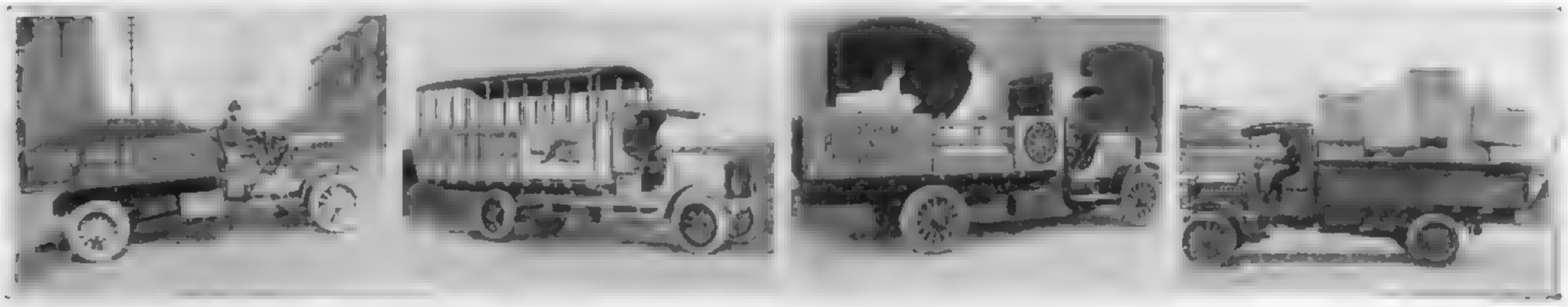

(Continued from Page 46

was a worn-out, secondhand bell-founder's dome. Mafeesh-fineesh! We have failed and are bankrupt—no more metal, no more money. Come on, let us eat and picnic. We shall not make you sad."

Barjavel took the failure as a matter of course.

"You've grown thin," he said. "Where's Puig?"

"Old fool says he won't come," was the reply.

Barjavel turned and bellowed into the foundry.

"Philibert! Attend! We're going by the *bac* to the Island, then up the towpath to a good, sunny bank. Follow us when ready. We'll have succulent foods and the best of wine."

The grotto of Melancholy returned no answer.

"Leave him to sulk it through," advised the Jackdaw. "I feel this is a day of destiny. If the lady at Arles foretold us the truth Puig will be happy and content, working for a man who has beaten him with hand and tongue. Or not. Let be. He must follow, now or never."

Barjavel accepted this philosophy, but in parting bellowed once more:

"Shut up shop and find us. Ile de la Barthelasse! Plenty of wine, old Philibert le Beau!"

A sibylline croak bade them go to the devil.

They so far obeyed as to leave and wind their way, happily talking, through Avignon to the old walls and the river. There at the *bac* landing below the Pope's Rock they embarked with a polite, sunburnt ferryman, who cast loose and let them drive aslant the flood. His pulley wheel chattered and strained its wire overhead; the clay-colored Rhone swept round them; while over the pink-tufted orchards on the island which they drew near, Saint Andrew's fort and Philip's tower rushed downstream by illusion, like castled mountains moving.

When the boat nosed into a mudbank Barjavel and his friend climbed out on the island shore. By the ferry cabin stood a man in rusty black—a waiter from some tavern hidden among the poplar trees—who bowed to Barjavel, and silently, as by appointment, handed them a basket covered with a tidy cloth. Jackdabos carried it, as they set forth up-river by the old towpath, now an intermittent sandy lane among bushes, with clearings and tiny sloughs where the crumbling river bank had melted.

They walked slowly, but their tongues galloped; and as of yore the talk flew roundabout and crisscross, quartering large fields of human life.

"Of course," Barjavel was saying, "bachelors aren't the most unhappy in this world. I remember two sentences ——"

Jackdabos laughed.

"Ah, that's like the old time!" he exclaimed. "How good it is to see and hear you, my friend! What texts from what ancient father are you masticating now?"

The giant viewed him slyly, askance.

"One is of Juvenal," he replied. "It says: 'Nothing is more intolerable than a rich woman.' And for the other, how wrote the son of Sirach? 'As the going up a sandy way is to the feet of the aged, so is a wife full of words to a quiet man.'"

Jackdabos chuckled.

"You are always the same," he declared with quiet affection. "But there are—cases—to which even your collected wisdom cannot apply."

They halted in a pleasant, circular grass-plot, open to the river, but screened elsewhere with young thicket and the dry, golden stalks of last year's rushes. April sunshine warmed the new grass, and, being reflected from the saffron flood, played with changeable, oozy lights among the green switches and furry tassels of the willows. Jackdabos, laying his basket on the bank, sat there cross-legged.

"By the way," said his friend abruptly, rolling down beside him and stretching at full length, "you remember Miss Moultrie? Nice girl that. You'll be glad to hear she was well, and asked about you in a letter to my sister."

Jackdabos fixed his eyes on Avignon, whose towers dreamed above the hurrying water.

"Yes. I am glad." His lips moved with difficulty; the sources of talk froze within him; on this, the day of his failure, no news could have pierced him more cruelly. "She—she is kind. I think perhaps—I'd better lay our tablecloth."

Dragging the basket toward him, he unfolded the white cloth on the grass, then busily set out in order the banquet which Barjavel had provided—a roast chicken, two bottles of wine, salad, golden-crusted bread and various dainties. He was aware that his host lay watching him sharply.

"You're not ruined yet, for you can buy more metal." The giant was reading his thoughts.

"Buy more metal and have another go. I'll lend you plenty ——"

Jackdabos looked up, smiling.

"You are a friend," he answered in a glow of admiration. "You follow a man clear into the little rooms of his heart, don't you? My dear Barjy, I'm grateful, but but" He nodded, as if the word were final; then with strained, mathematical precision arranged three heavy glass tumblers round the cloth. "I can't explain. Every tub must stand on its own bottom. Very slow work. But you know some things, like dying, and this—this other—a chap has to do all alone!"

Barjavel nodded with tremendous energy, and sat upright like one whose watching had ceased forever.

"Anyhow, you can smoke with an old man, can't you?" he growled, and tossed over a box of sinfully bedizened cigarettes. "Humble yourself that far?"

So, in their warm retreat among the willows, they lounged together, relishing equally the savor of delicate tobacco and the smell of a spring bonfire that drifted, like strong earthy incense, from where some island farmer was burning brush. They mused, and let the flow of the river carry past their thoughts in a trance, till conscious only of that yellow surface, here rippling into a line of shark-fin waves, there uncoiling strings of loud whirlpools, or suddenly returning calm and smooth, as an eddy that bore tiny matted rafts and jack-straw patterns of broken reeds, mingled with the numberless old wine corks that bob in the Rhone.

"I'm sorry for Puigo," confessed the young man, out of this long contemplation. "I treated him shabbily about his gold platter. He took all that like a brick. And I did promise to make his fortune. *Ah!* Our promises!"

A distant, mellow chiming floated through sunlight to their island. Behind towered hill and long ramparts the Jacquemart of Avignon rang noon. Other sweet bells answered. When the music had passed overhead there was only the fleeting gurgle of the whirlpools, and the whisper of an April breeze passing through the sere lances of the rushes.

A loud hail from down the island startled them.

Through a gap in the willows they caught fragmentary glimpses of the towpath, a leafy tunnel checkered with pale-green, vernal brightness. Through this a man appeared, running like a messenger. He stopped, hailed once more, then seemed to spy the two holiday makers; for in a clearing against the southerly glitter of the flood his black silhouette hopped off the ground, cutting a strange antic. The creature yelled some greeting, either of triumph or derision. Then he came jogging on sedately.

"It's Puigo. Good."

The sturdy little smith walked over their grass plot with a determined air till he stood between them. All mud and smut, he had done nothing to remove the stains of combat except wash his face; one eye was nearly lost in a puffy swelling, and his nose gleamed large and red as a carrot. In both arms he dandled what might have been a small baby wrapped in brown paper.

"It breaks every law of metals!" he declared angrily. "That old she-dog of a furnace, hey what, she did the trick after all! I smashed the mold to spite you, Jacko, and ooh, your bronze, your bronze ——"

The Jackdaw scrambled up and stood waiting, deadly pale.

"All gone," he stammered. "All wasted. I suppose?"

The smith pitched his brown paper nursling into Barjavel's lap.

"No-o-o!" he blubbered, and fell on the Jackdaw's neck. "She's cooling. She's perfect! Perfect! Jacko, we're both—o-o-oh, hoo, hoo—we're both made men for life!"

He hung there limp in his partner's arms, crying like a naughty child

"Look at the model, Barjy," said Jackdabos over his shoulder. "'Twill give you some idea. You're the third person to see

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our model. The thing itself, of course, is made heroic."

He was too busy comforting Puig, they were both too shaken with work, hunger, lack of sleep, to watch what Barjavel might do; but they heard the crackle of stiff paper being unfolded and became aware of a mighty silence. He must be looking at that model in black wax, which they already knew by heart. Then suddenly they were crushed in a bear's hug, swept off their feet, and tossed aloft like playthings.

"Oh, my boys!" wailed the good giant. "This will live long after we are dead and gone! Oh, my boys!"

Jackdabos was stuttering in the air as he went up and down.

"Does it—does it b-b-beat Cellini?"

"Cocked hat!" cried Barjavel.

He set them down dizzily; ran to the tablecloth, opened a bottle, and filled two tumblers with pale-red wine.

"Drink," he commanded, giving one glass to Puig and keeping one, "to our master."

They drank solemnly. The Jackdaw hung his head, trembling like a tired horse. But next moment they had him at arms' length, whirling in a round upon the grass. Barjavel was singing for their dance; and the words of his song were:

"My love, she's but a lassie yet,
A lightsome, lovely lassie yet;
It scarce would do
To sit and woo
Down by the stream sae glassy yet."

It was not on St. Bénézet's broken bridge, yet no livelier dance was ever footed in Avignon.

"But there's a braw time comin' yet,
When we may gang a-roamin' yet,
And hint wi' glee
O' joys to be . . ."

The singer choked and failed, the round ceased in a tangle, the three friends stood as it were admiring their own folly.

"Come," ordered Barjavel at last quietly. "We should eat."

With a kingly ceremony, more than half serious, he led the shabby little brown-clad youth to the feast by the river's brim.

"Sit down before us, Jacko," said he. "Where the master sits is the head of the table."

(THE END)

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A STREET carnival now touring the South is seemingly the repository of a most perplexing military secret. On a recent visit by this particular carnival to a Tennessee city a part of the attending throng heard a barker extol the clairvoyant powers of Madam ——.

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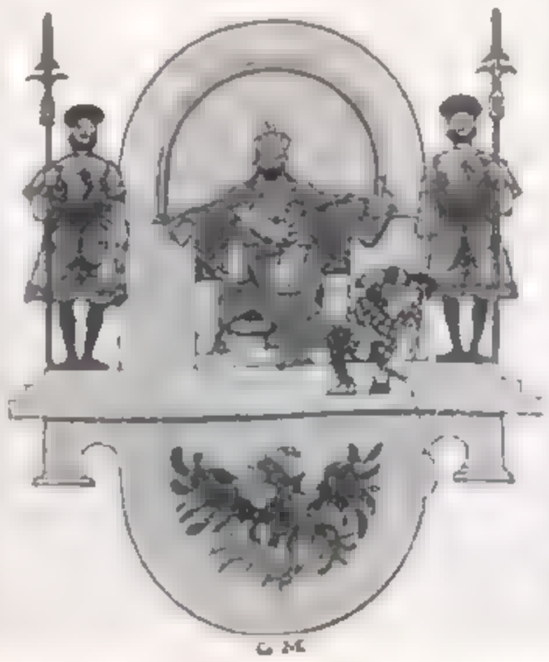
Whether Minnie still loved Tom and where the old hermit buried the gold were questions legitimate enough; but that somebody had taken advantage of a lady's trustful disposition her answer revealed when Madam —— was confronted with the query:

"Where is Villa?"

Her reply was:

"Her real name is not Villa. It is Margaret; and she is now in Atlanta, Georgia."



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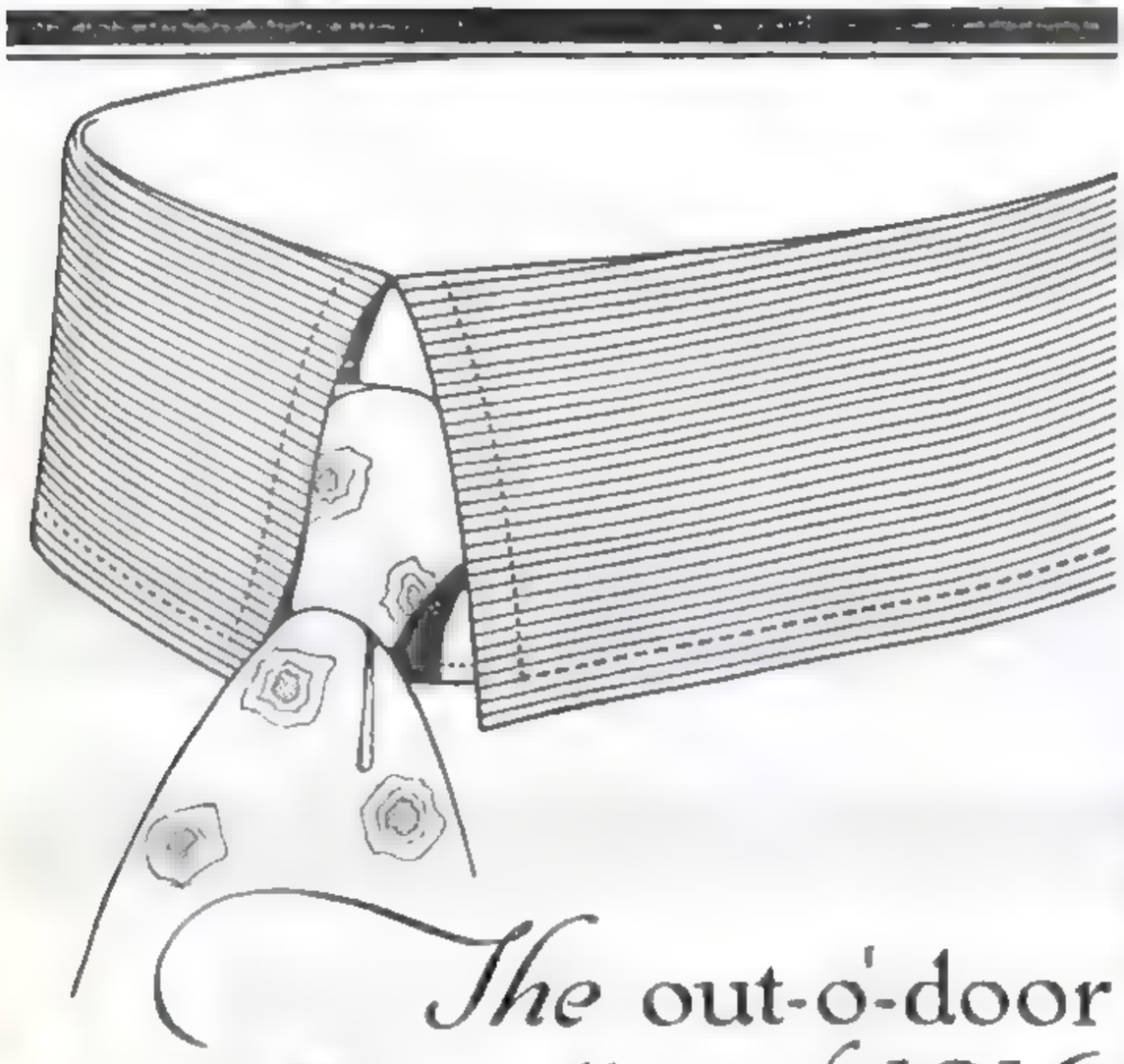

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2 for 25 cent Collars

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BUCK AND THE BISCUIT SHOOTER

(Continued from Page 17)

contraption for?'—and gave the handle a yank. I found out, all right. It was one of them shower baths, an' pretty near drowned me ——"

"Brown! Miss Brown!" shouted Montague.

The girl jumped to her feet.

"Here; lemme help you down over them rocks. . . . So it's Miss Brown, is it?"

"Miss Brown will do for a film name!" laughed the girl. "How do you like it?"

"Nothin' very fancy about it," objected Buck. "De Vere or La Fontaine would go better. I ain't agoin' to call you Miss Brown—I tell you those!"

"No," twinkled the girl; "you may keep on calling me sister. . . . Ready, Mr. Montague."

IV

"WELL," said Ben Leslie, the elongated property man, yawning over his soup, "this is our last night here; and I ain't sorry. Too far from the bright lights for me!"

"Huh!" ejaculated Buck disgustedly. "The bright lights never got you anything."

"Still, I like to look at 'em," responded Ben. "I don't care if I never see any more scenery as long as I live. The evenings here are pretty tedious if a feller hasn't got a nice little extry girl to fill up with lies about himself—what a great actor he is, and such. . . . How do you find the evenings, Buck?"

"Aw, shut up!" growled Parvin.

After dinner Buck went to his room and spread his entire wardrobe on the bed. It was a gaudy collection; and after deep thought he selected a plaid shirt of violent hue, some Mexican-silver jewelry, light riding gloves with beaded cuffs, and a flaming scarlet neckerchief. He looked longingly at his white angora chaps, but could not reconcile them with an evening stroll along the rim, so confined himself to his best trousers, tucking them into his boot-tops. He also shaved himself against the grain; and when the operation was completed he examined his weather-beaten countenance at extreme length.

"You ain't no prize beauty, Parvin," he remarked to his reflection in the mirror, "but you're easier on the eyes after a clean shave!"

When he was satisfied that art could do no more for him in the line of adornment, he went out and tramped up and down the board walk between the Bright Angel and the hotel; and there were times when he peered into the black gulf and hummed a few strains of that melancholy ditty, The Cowboy's Lament:

I'm but a pore cowboy; I know I done wrong!

A quick, light footstep sounded in the distance, and Buck, throwing away his cigarette, hastened to meet the girl.

"I asked you to come for a little walk tonight," said he, "because I've got news for you. Bully news!"

"News—for me?"

"The best ever! I kind of thought it was comin', after Jim wrote in that little part for you an' give you some scenes. I'd 'a' said something then, only I didn't want to build up false hopes, sister ——"

"But this news? What is it?"

"Can't you guess?"

The girl stamped her foot.

"Tell me at once!"

"Well," said Buck, "I heard Jim tellin' Jennings that he would give you a job with the reg'lar stock company any time you wanted it. The very words he said—any time you wanted it! A steady job, sister! Think of it!"

"Oh, no!"

"Oh, yes! Of course I don't know what he pays the women, but you wouldn't get less'n thirty a week to start."

The girl made no comment; but she seemed to be struggling with a strong emotion of some sort, and Buck eyed her curiously.

"Look here," said he gently; "it's such a surprise that I reckon you ain't got it through your head yet. Listen, and I'll give you the whole scenario: You made good so strong in this one picture—no experience or nothing—that Jim maybe figures that you can be developed into a reg'lar actress. Why, you might even get to be a leadin' woman in time ——"

Here Buck was interrupted by a peal of laughter. At first he believed it to be the usual hysterical outburst of nervous femininity; but as he listened he became aware that there was no hysteria in the girl's merriment.

"Oh, dear!" she gasped at last. "It's too—too funny for words!"

"Funny!" ejaculated Buck. "What's funny about it?"

"Everything!" And the girl laughed again.

Buck stood still and stared at her. Then he took her by the elbow and shook her slightly.

"Come out of it!" said he with stern disapproval. "Here's your chance—brought to you on a silver platter—and all you can do is laugh about it! What ails you anyway? Is it so funny to quit biscuit shootin' and be somebody?"

"But—you don't understand!" quavered the girl, attempting to control herself. "You don't understand!"

"I understand this," said Buck with extreme dignity: "I thought I was doin' you a favor. I thought you'd appreciate it; but now ——" He ended the sentence with a wave of his open hands.

"But suppose it was all in fun?" said the girl. "Suppose I wanted to know what moving pictures were like—how they were made? Suppose I did it for the experience and nothing else? But a steady job—oh, I couldn't think of it!"

Buck gaped at her, speechless.

He found no language in which to express the conflicting emotions that wrestled within him.

"I've had a lot of fun," said she, "and I've enjoyed every minute of it—really I have."

"Yes," growled Buck; "you've had a lot of fun—and I'm the goat!"

"You mustn't feel that way about it," pleaded the girl. "You mustn't spoil it for me."

Buck shook his head uncomprehendingly.

"You must like biscuit shootin' better than most of 'em," said he. "I don't get you at all, sister. I thought you'd be just tickled to death—same as I was when I heard it—and you ain't tickled the least little bit. You act like it was all a joke."

"Let's walk," said the girl. "It's a heavenly night."

For a time there was silence. Buck rolled a cigarette, took two puffs, and flicked it over the edge of the rim.

"You could make a name for yourself," said he, returning to the subject.

"A name isn't much."

"Oh, ain't it? You listen to me, sister—a big name gets the big money."

"But money doesn't make you any happier."

"It sure has a revivin' effect on me," sighed Buck. "What little I've had has pleased me a lot. I reckon it would take a ton of it to make me sad!"

"Oh, let's talk about something else," said the girl. "Tell me some more stories about yourself—down in the Pecos country."

Buck shook his head.

"Somehow I ain't in the mood for it. Here I been thinkin' how fine it would be—you and me in the same company, where we could see each other every day—and you go an' throw a monkey wrench into the machinery, an' now she's all jimmed up! . . . Well, I'm runnin' true to form. I never had a nice dream yet that I didn't wake up with a awful headache!"

They paused on one of the points of rock overhanging the rim of the Cañon. A full moon was pouring its flood of soft light into the black depths, silvering the heavy outlines with a wonderful radiance. Buck leaned against the iron railing and gazed at the moon. Then he felt for his sack of tobacco, dropped it back into his pocket unopened, and sighed heavily.

"You mustn't feel bad about it," said the girl gently. "I know that everything you tried to do for me was prompted by real kindness—unselfishness. I appreciate it more than you know; and I shan't forget it—or you."

"Sister," said Buck with a last reproachful glance at the moon, "don't you worry about me. No matter how bad a man feels, he can always fight his way through somehow. It's you I'm thinkin' about—you, goin' back to biscuit shootin' for them confounded trippers! You wasn't made for it—too little, for one thing—too young, for another. I tell you, it just makes me sick all over."

The girl moved uneasily.

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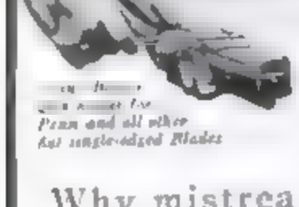

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"Perhaps I ought to tell you a little secret," said she—"something about myself. When you saw me in that white——"

"You don't need to tell me nothing!" exclaimed Buck wildly. "I didn't ask you any questions, an' it didn't make no difference to me that you was slingin' hash! It ain't what a girl does; it's what she is an' one look at you was plenty for me. I know I'm rough an' not much to look at, but I'd try to use a woman right——"

"The moonlight is gorgeous, isn't it? Look at the shadows in the Cañon!"

Buck caught his breath with the gasp of a man plucked back from an abyss.

"Why—yes!" he cried. "It's a right pretty night, ain't it? Too much moon though. Every time I get to lookin' at that ole silvery pie-plate up there in the sky, I I turn kind of mushy—foolish. Wouldn't you like to walk some more?"

They parted near the scene of their first meeting—on the rim between the hotel and the Bright Angel cottages.

"Is it good-by for keeps, sister?" asked Buck. "You know we're leavin' the first thing in the mornin'. Chances are I won't see you again."

"I'm afraid not," said the girl.

"Think you might change your mind about that job?"

The girl shook her head.

"If you ever should," persisted Buck, "a line in care of the Titan Company, Los Angeles, will get me. . . . You said something about a secret a while ago. I ain't inquisitive or anything, but if I guess it the first time will you tell me if I'm right?"

"Yes."

"You ain't married to some worthless feller that won't support you, are you?"

The girl laughed.

"No," said she; "I'm not married to anyone."

Buck heaved a sigh of relief.

"I wanted to be sure," said he. "A girl put that over on me once. She like to got me shot—just for takin' her to a dance. . . . Well, sister, good-by, an' a lot of luck!"

Suddenly Buck found a warm little hand in each of his big paws.

"You'll never know how much I've enjoyed your company," said the girl. "I shall always count you one of my very best friends—always! . . . Good-by, Buck!"

Again he watched her disappear, rolling a cigarette the while.

"Ain't women the queer things?" he mused. "And this one is the queerest of the whole bunch!" Then he turned and shook his fist at the moon. "You pretty near got me that time!" said he, grinning. "A full moon and a girl—any ole girl—has always had me beat, to go! . . . If this one hadn't stopped me when she did—well, I might have talked myself into one hell of a fix!"

Later he looked at himself in the glass before retiring.

"A swell bridegroom you'd make!" said he with sarcasm. "The gall of you, Parvin! You give me a fit of sickness just to think what a plumb idiot you are sometimes! You—in double harness? . . . Good night!"

■

"IT'S your say, Buck! Wake up!"

Buck squeezed his five cards into the palms of his hands and spread them until the pips became visible.

"Pass!" said he. "If it was rainin' face cards I wouldn't get nothing but deuces an' treys!"

The train clicked slowly over the ties on the way to Williams.

Buck, Ben Leslie, Charlie Dupree and Jennings were playing poker in the smoking car. James Montague entered and seated himself across the aisle.

"Well, Buck," said he, "I saw your little friend up at the hotel this morning."

Parvin rolled a cautious eye at the director.

"Yeh?" said he.

"I've been wondering how you happened to meet her."

"Keep right on a-wonderin'," grunted Buck.

"I was thinking of offering her a job."

"She didn't want no job."

"Oho! You know that much, do you?"

"I know a lot more'n I'll tell."

"That's right, Buck. Always respect a confidence. . . . How long have you known it?"

"Known what?"

"Who she is—what she is—all about her."

How the Sherwin-Williams Company met the dye shortage

The Sherwin-Williams Company is the largest consumer in the United States of certain important dyes used in color making. These dyes are known as Paranitraniline and Beta Napthol and are used in making reds of various kinds necessary to many industries.

The Company, soon after the war broke out, foreseeing the difficulties of importing dyes from abroad, laid plans for the manufacture of these and other dyestuffs they required, at their extensive Dry Color Works at Chicago.

They had previously erected a Tar Distillation plant which produced some of the important basic materials used in the manufacture of dyes. This plant was quickly enlarged and expert chemists were engaged to install and operate a complete and efficient works for the production of finished dyes. These works are now in operation and are producing daily a satisfactory output of Paranitraniline and Beta Napthol of quality equal to the best that has been imported. Additional equipment will shortly be installed which will double the output and orders are now being accepted for the surplus not required in the Company's own color works.

The Company is also booking orders for Para Reds and invites inquiries from consumers of these products.

The Company is also actively engaged with plans for the production of many other important dyes and hopes soon to make definite announcement with regard to the supplies they expect to offer the trade.

In manufacturing dyestuffs, the Sherwin-Williams Company is carrying out its policy of manufacturing all of its own important raw materials, the production of which have had so much to do with the good quality of their products.

SHERWIN-WILLIAMS
PAINTS & VARNISHES

Address all inquiries to
The Sherwin-Williams Company, Manufacturers
Sales Dept., 613 Canal Road, N. W., Cleveland, Ohio

Safe Night Driving

Motorists! Avoid the dangers of night driving caused by blinding headlights. Obey the law of Safety — protect yourself, your family and approaching motorists or pedestrians by equipping your lamps with

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Not a dimmer—but a prismatic glass lens that fits into your lamps in place of the plain glass. Produces a 100% light absolutely without a glare or dazzle. Approved by authorities. Conforms to automobile light laws everywhere. Ideal for country or city driving.

Throws the rays along the ground and only 3½ feet high. Stops the need of constant switching lights on and off. The lens is made on scientific principles.

Used by the fastest Electric Railway in the United States on trains attaining a speed of 80 miles an hour.

Easy to put on and very attractive in appearance.

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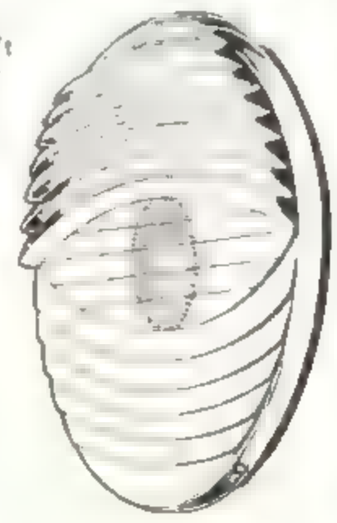
$2.50 to $5.25 a pair, according to size.



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Oakland, Cal. — The Jones Auto Supply Co.
San Francisco — Eccles & Smith Co.
Los Angeles — Eccles & Smith Co.
Portland, Ore. — Eccles & Smith Co.

"Ever since the minute I laid eyes on her."

Montague favored Buck with a long, hard stare; then he shook his head.

"You probably recognized her by the photographs," said he. "I thought there was something mighty familiar in that girl's looks. . . . Well, you slipped over a good one on me—getting her a job as an extra woman. I ——" He paused as he became aware that Buck was regarding him with mingled incredulity and bewilderment.

"Her photographs!" ejaculated Buck. "What photographs? . . . Deal me out for a few hands, boys." He rose and walked Montague to the other end of the car. "Now then," said he, "what's all this bunk about me recognizin' that girl by her photographs?"

"You said you knew her the minute you saw her."

"No; I only said I knew what she was!"

Montague shook his head.

"We're all up a tree somehow," said he. "I don't get you at all, and you don't get me. How could you tell ——"

"She had on a white dress the first time I seen her," explained Buck, "and I tumbled right away. She said if I got her the job I wasn't to mention it to you ——"

"Mention what?" demanded Montague.

"Why, that she was a biscuit shooter o' course. Seems she was a little sensitive about it ——"

Suddenly Montague collapsed into a seat and laughed until the tears rolled down his cheeks.

"A biscuit shooter!" he whooped. "Oh, that's good! That's—immense! Oh, ho, ho!" He rocked back and forth, holding his sides.

"When you get done givin' that imitation of a laughin' jackass," said Buck severely, "I wisht you'd tell me what it's all about."

"Don't you get it at all?" panted Montague.

"Not a-tall," growled Buck. "What do you know that I don't?"

Montague wiped his eyes and motioned Buck to a seat beside him.

"This morning," said the director, "I went up to the hotel to make some arrangements about the transportation. While I was standing at the desk I heard two of the clerks talking. They mentioned a Miss Brownell—Miriam Brownell. Ever hear of her?"

"Go on!" said Buck grimly.

"In case you haven't," continued Montague, "she's probably the richest young woman in America. More stuff has been written about her ——"

"Your mind is wanderin'," interrupted Buck. "Get to the point!"

"All right. It seems that Miss Brownell was stopping at the hotel. 'Here she comes now!' says one of the clerks; and I turned round to look. . . . Buck, I hope to die if it wasn't the little extra woman—your biscuit shooter!"

Again Montague rocked and swayed in a gale of laughter. Buck removed his sombrero and rubbed his head long and earnestly. At last he found something to say.

"Did—did she act as if she'd ever seen you before, Jim?"

"That was the bully part of it! She came right up to me, shook hands, and thanked me for helping to make her vacation a pleasant one. Now that's what I call a regular girl—money or no money."

Buck fumbled at his tobacco sack.

"She was only havin' a little fun, Jim," said he; "and I—I was the goat."

"She must like goats then," said Montague. "The last thing she said to me was 'Be sure and remember me to my friend, Mr. Parvin.'"

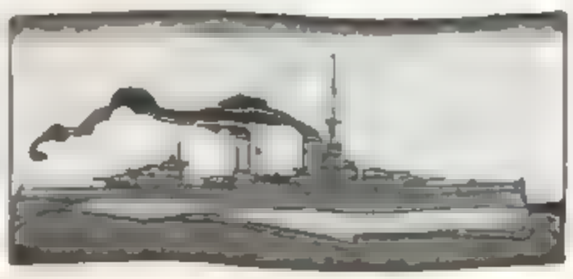
"Did she say that—honest?"

Montague nodded, and Buck drew a long breath.

"Jim," said he, "I know of two ways to get a battle out of me. One would be to spread this story round in the company ——"

"And the other?"

"Would be to start knockin' the idle rich. Some of those folks must be human after all!"



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Far more interesting and remarkable is the weather-proof quality of the white lead film, which, as paint, is spread on the house.

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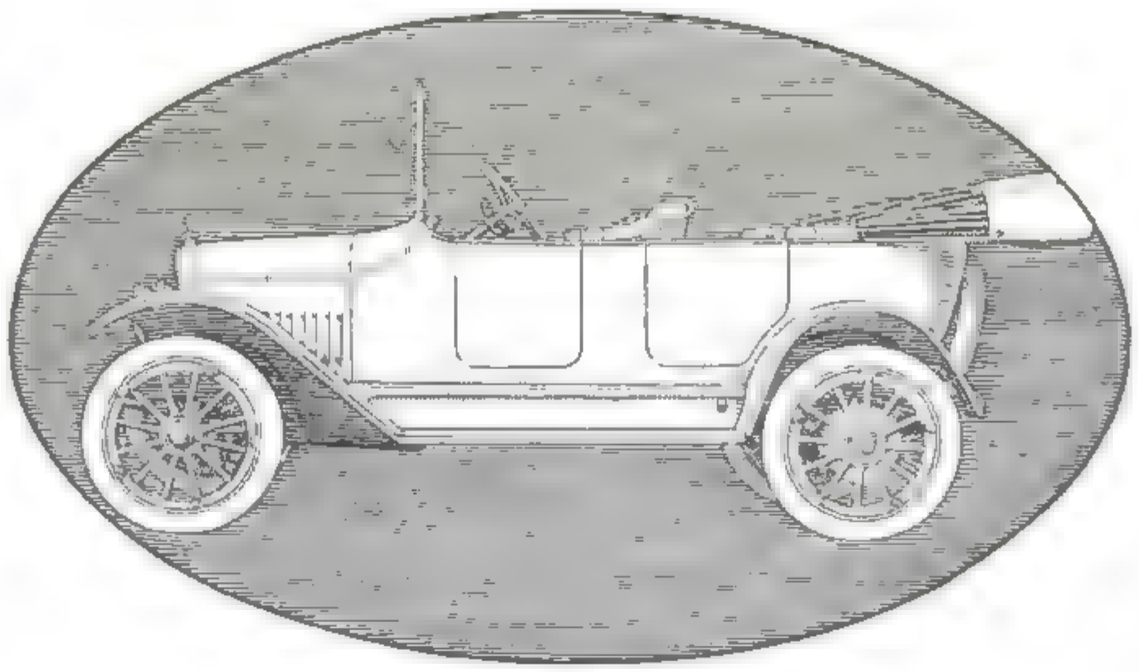

Unity

IT may have come to your notice that The Maxwell Motor Company does not base its entire advertising appeal upon the speed of a motor, or the foreign lines of a body, or genuine leather upholstery, or the social distinction of its patrons—to the exclusion of every other feature of the Maxwell Car.

It is the Maxwell policy that no essential unit of the Maxwell shall dominate Maxwell Character as embodied in the car and expressed in Maxwell advertising.

The motor, the chassis, the frame, the axles, the spring suspension, the electrical equipment—all the factors in Maxwell Character—have been designed and manufactured for a single fundamental purpose—to create a harmonious and efficient unity.

All the essential Maxwell parts are designed by us and manufactured by us to contribute their full share to the achievement of the maximum comfort, convenience, safety, service and economy.

There is no one important or conspicuous feature of the Maxwell; it is just the Maxwell Motor Car—designed, manufactured, sold and kept running by The Maxwell Motor Company.

The prices, including Full Equipment, are: Touring Car, $655; Roadster, $635.
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Maxwell

Motor Company · Detroit, Mich.

The Vogue of Community Plate

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DINING ROOM *of* MRS. O. H. P. BELMONT

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Or sold in individual sets; for instance, teaspoons $5.00 the dozen. At your service for fifty years.

ONEIDA COMMUNITY, LTD.
ONEIDA, N. Y.

THE MAN NEXT DOOR

(Continued from Page 20)

But what could I do? I couldn't find any way to meet her. I didn't want her money and I didn't want her to want mine. Well, that's how it happened. I deceived you all, that's true. I deceived her too—she didn't really know who I was until less than a week ago. Then she came."

"Why didn't you come and tell me at first?" says Old Man Wright.

"How could I?" says he. "I knew what that would mean, from all Curly said. Besides, I wanted to win her just for what I was—just for what she was. I wanted to be sure she'd love me the way I wanted, for just what I was. I'm sure now.

"But I was going to come and tell you; we came on now for that very thing—the two of us, as you see. It wasn't any pleasure for me to deceive either you or her—I never liked that any more than you did."

Old Man Wright he just set looking at him, and he couldn't talk. The young fellow went on.

"I loved her the first time I saw her, sir," says he. "I resolved, the first time I ever saw her, that sometime I'd marry her. I did. And we're happy—we're happier than I ever thought anybody could be. How can you bear a grudge against a girl like that—your own girl? She's only done what she thought was right. And it was right too! And it goes!"

"So you're the son of this family!" says Old Man Wright, slow. "That can't be helped, neither. I—— Well, I didn't know. I—I thought you wanted her for her money. I'll go so far as to say that."

"It wouldn't of made any difference," says Bonnie Bell then. "I'd of married him anyway. It's just as he says—he never told me about it until just a little while ago. I thought he was some sort of a distant relative of the Wisner family. If you stop to think you can see how all these things happened, easy enough. Especial you can when you stop to think that, on foot and offen of a horse, Curly is shore apt to do more fool things than a cageful of white rats—God bless him! Because nobody else but him could of done just what he's done. If he hadn't where'd we be?"

"Well, it does seem to me," says I then, "that most of this happened account of me. I reckon I made about as many fool breaks as any fellow could," says I. "Like I told your pa, I couldn't see a load of hay. But here's where I quit. It don't look like you need me no more, for things is mixed up now as bad as they can get," says I.

"Keep still, Curly," says Bonnie Bell to me. "Set down!"

About then I seen them two old men looking at each other. Without saying nothing, they both got up and went out into the parlor together. We couldn't hear what they said. For that matter, we couldn't hear what we said ourselfs, because of something that happened around in there.

Their collie dog, Cæsar, was barking at us when we come in. He'd sort of got under the table. But now we heard another dog barking plumb crazy. And now in comes from somewhere, out in the garridge or the car maybe, that Boston dog, Peanut.

He was looking for a settlement too. He don't hesitate, but he goes straight for this collie under the table, and they mix it plenty right then and there, till most of us was glad enough to get up on the chairs. I tried to stop them and the old lady and Bonnie Bell was both hollering at them; but the hired man he raised his hand.

"Let 'em alone!" says he. "They got almost human intelligence someways," says he. "Let 'em alone, so they can have it out."

So they had it out for quite a while there in the dining room, under the table and among the chairs, and under the sofa, and pretty much everywhere, both of 'em enjoying of theirselfs plenty. Their dog, Cæsar, had got older now and Peanut he had his hands full; but he was shore industrious and sincere.

By and by, after quite a while, they hauled apart and set looking at each other, their tongues hanging out, happy and smiling. Peanut he goes over to his mistress, and he was shaking a ear that was loose. Cæsar he goes over to the old lady, limping and holding up his foot, him looking plumb contented.

"They'll get along all right now," says the hired man—James, or Jimmie, or Jim, whatever you ought to call him.

I couldn't believe he was young Mr. James Wisner. Sometimes I don't hardly even yet.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourselves," says Bonnie Bell. "I declare, men are brutes anyhow!"

"I know it, Bonnie Bell," says I. "I've made plenty of trouble, but not no more. I'm taking the morning train West," says I.

"Where to?" she ast me; and I can't answer—for me the whole world was upside down, same as this room here.

About then the two old men come back into the room, both of them serious; but you could see easy that they hadn't had no war—only some kind of a squaring and settling up; I reckon because of Bonnie Bell and this James, or Jimmie, or Jim, not being no hired man none after all, which maybe he had a strawberry mark on his arm—I don't know how they proved it.

Old Man Wright he stood up, with his hand on top of a chair; and he made a little after-dinner talk that cost him, maybe, several million dollars—not that he cared!

"I come here to-night," says he, "to maybe take the law into my own hands—anyways I reckon I come here to set in judgment; but I wasn't no good judge, because I was trying the case without having all of the facts. But I'm this kind of man," says he, "that when I've made a mistake, and know it, I'm game to stand up and say so. That's what I'm doing now. I reckon I been wrong. Some things you can't help. I ain't going to try to help this no more.

"The fact is, I reckon, maybe it's the best thing that could of happened. It didn't happen through me. I done my best to keep it from happening. That's where I was wrong. I'm glad of all this now and I take back what I said. I've been a twenty-two-carat, pink-eyed, black-striped wild ass of the desert, though not halfway as bad a fool as Curly. It was him got us all in wrong."

Old Man Wisner he stands up too; and he makes his confession that's good for his soul. His Adam's apple kind of walked up and down his neck, but he come through.

"Don't say no more, Colonel," says he. "I'm to blame for all this myself. I was the biggest fool that ever was. That fence—why, that fence now ——"

James, or Jimmie, or Jim, and Bonnie Bell they looks at each other then and laughs right out.

"You didn't build it high enough," says he; "you couldn't!"

"I'm glad I couldn't," says Old Man Wisner. "Things are going to come out all right, the way they ought to come. I've learned a lot to-night—a lot about being neighbors. Son, we had a neighbor and we didn't know it. Maybe it's that way plenty times. We had one neighbor that has saved your father from being broke and disgraced before all the world—before to-morrow night. That's what kind of neighbors we had all along," says he; "and we tried to build a fence and keep them away from us! Yes; thank Gawd, I couldn't build the fence high enough," says he.

"I knew something about this, dad," says James, or Jimmie, or Jim, then. "I could of told you long ago that ranch deal couldn't win. Scale it down, get at the real business and human values, and it ought to win—and win big!"

Old Man Wisner he's always rather strong for organization. He looks over at Old Man Wright and they both look at this young man; and they both nod.

"That's a good idea," says Old Man Wright—"a damn good idea! Now then, we're beginning to talk! Why can't we throw the two businesses in together and make one hand wash the other, and let this young gentleman take care of the reorganization on the spot?"

"That's the idea!" breaks in Bonnie Bell right then. "There ain't any better cow country out of doors than the Yellow Bull Valley. I know that. Give us a chance and we'll pull this whole business out of the hole," says she.

"James," says Old Man Wright, and he walks around and holds out his hand, playing the game wide open, like he always done—"James," says he, "will you shake hands with the worst old fool there is in the whole world—except Curly?"

Now James he's been doing pretty well up to now, but this about knocks him out. He got up, kind of red and startled, and he shakes hands with the old man but couldn't say nothing and didn't seem to know what to do with his hands. So he puts his hand in his pocket, like a man will, and he seems to feel something there; and all at once,

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Preserves Roads
Prevents Dust

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THIS is a straight talk—manufacturer to taxpayer! It's about the place you live in—and about a product we sell.

Your roads, if you live in some communities, aren't altogether what they should be.

In dry weather, the dust is thick, gets into your homes, covers your clothes. In wet weather, the mud is one big nasty mess.

The surface is so rough that riding is no pleasure. The automobiles bump; the wagons rattle; both go too often to the repair shop. Such streets and roads are not only a discredit to a community but *a very real liability.*

They are a sign that you are slack; that your community isn't abreast of other towns.

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So there's but small demand for property here.

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Now, what's the use of all that?

You could have fine pavements and good roads just as well as other towns. You needn't have one poor thoroughfare in the place.

For with Tarvia you could at *no extra cost* transform your roads into smooth, durable, dry, dustless highways.

You ask what we mean by *no extra cost.* Well, we'll tell you. The first cost of Tarvia is more than offset by the saving in maintenance expense; by increased property values; by reduced taxes. Its use really costs you nothing.

Before "Tarvia-X" (penetration method) was used on Scott St., Milwaukee, Wis.

After "Tarvia-X" (penetration method) was used on Scott St., Milwaukee, Wis.

Special Service Department

In order to bring the facts before taxpayers as well as road authorities, The Barrett Company has organized a Special Service Department, which keeps up to the minute on all road problems. If you will write to nearest office regarding road conditions or problems in your vicinity, the matter will have the prompt attention of experienced engineers. This service is free for the asking. If you want *better roads* and *lower taxes*, this Department can greatly assist you.

Illustrated booklet on request. Address our nearest office.

The Barrett Company

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Sealpax
Cleanest Coolest Athletic
UNDERWEAR

How fine, clean, refreshing is a Sealpax Union Suit! It comes fresh from the laundry to you in a sealed container—unhandled—unmussed—no dirt—no dust.

Sealpax is the airiest, coolest underwear you can wear—made of snow-white Nainsook—in a new "Freer-Cut" Athletic Style, giving extra comfort and freedom to arms and legs.

Buy a Sealpax garment at once; break the seal and slip into an immaculately clean, cool, union suit.

Ask your retailer for Sealpax, sold in sealed containers only. Men's Athletic Union Suits $1.00; Shirts and Drawers 50c each.

If your retailer hasn't Sealpax, write us.

THE SEALPAX COMPANY
260 Church Street, New York

not being able to think of nothing else, he pulls out what he found and holds it out to Old Man Wright.

"Colonel," says he, "will you have a chew? It's Arrow Head—same name as our home spring out there," says he. "I've used no other since. I just heard you own most of the stock in the Arrow Head Tobacco Company; but I ain't surprised. You ain't overlooked much!"

I reckon that was the luckiest accident ever happened to him—when he found that piece of plug. Old Man Wright taken a bite of it liberal, and says he:

"Bonnie Bell you had the best ma in the world. Seems to me sometimes you favor your ma," says he.

Then they kissed each other; fact is, most everybody got kissed around there excepting me. Yet, when you come to figure about it, I'd been responsible for a good many of those things and the way they come out, and I didn't get no credit for it. No foreman ever does.

Old Lady Wisner, like I said, she was setting there and saying mostly "Bless me!" and "Bless my soul!"—nobody paying much attention to her. But now Bonnie Bell she sidles over to her and sort of puts out her hand, shy. The old lady she puts a arm around her, and she begins to cry too. They was both right happy.

"Son," says Old Man Wright after a while to James, or Jimmie, or Jim, "where have I seen you before?" He'd been looking at him for some time.

"The first time you ever saw me, Colonel," says he, "was when I fell in love with your daughter, sir," says he. "That was when I drove you home to your house on Christmas Eve."

"You drove—when you drove us home!" says Old Man Wright. "What do you mean about that? We had our own car; and I give the driver a ten-dollar gold piece that night because it was Christmas Eve. He got lit up; so he was wabbly next day too. I remember that."

"So do I," says James, laughing. "I've got that money now. But it was your real driver got lit up, not me. You see, when Bonnie Bell come out in the storm that night she didn't notice that it wasn't her car. Hers looked a good deal like it—both the same make and right new. Maybe she wasn't very well acquainted with her new chauffore yet; so she says to me to take her home. So I had to do that."

"How did you know where to go?" ast Bonnie Bell then, laughing.

"I knew all about you," says he. "I'd been busy for over a hour there in the hotel dining room with Henderson, and that was long enough to learn all I ever wanted to know. I knew how rich you were. That was why I drove you home and didn't let you know who I was; that was why I never tried to call; that was why a lot of things happened right the way they did. I had some fool theories of my own, maybe; maybe I did get a touch of socialism or something of that kind when I was in college.

"But anyway, Colonel Wright," he goes on, "I want to say to you, sir, that I've known you and admired you a lot more than you ever knew. I voted for you for alderman—though my own dad was running against you. I thought you stood for what I thought was right. All the world is really neighbors," says he, "and the little old human democracy is good enough for me. I voted for you then—and I do now. My dad has a lot to learn."

He turns to his pa then, and the old man like to of blew up again, he was so mad; but we all ended by laughing at this too.

"It's in sixes and sevens," says James, or Jimmie, or Jim, "but there's a chance there on that ranch. Maybe I can learn. And it's so fine out there—with the mountains, and the skies, and the wind blowing in the sage, and the ——"

"Hush, man!" says Old Man Wright to him. "You're making me so homesick I can't stand it. We'll all go out there to live. I'll tell you what we'll do," says he in his rushing way, sort of taking the lead of things: "We'll keep these two houses in here for both of us for our city homes, and we'll all of us have the old ranch for our country home," says he.

"Oh, dad!" says Bonnie Bell, and she goes up to the old man, crying because she was happy. She'd seen him change right there before her—he'd got forty years younger in the last ten minutes. "Dad," says she—"dad, we will—when?"

"Daughter," says he, "we're going to begin right now to get them Better Things we started out for. You're going to have the place in life that your ma said you'd ought to have. You and Katherine," says he, "will have to fix it up about that house I was going to leave in my last will and testament. But, like I said, I'm going to give Katherine half a million when she marries—if she marries as good a man as you did. You see, Katherine kissed me—right here in a soft spot—on top of my old bald haid."

After a while I sort of got unbraided and moved over toward the door, it seeming like it wasn't no place for me no more.

"Where you going?" says Old Man Wright to me; and Old Man Wisner he says something, too, about my not being in a hurry.

"I don't know, but I reckon I'll be moving along now. I done all this, but what thanks do I get for it?"

I starts away to get outside this kissing zone, so to speak. I didn't know but Old Lady Wisner'd try to kiss me and I didn't want that to happen.

"Ho, ho!" says Old Man Wright, laughing like he did years ago. "Hear that fool boy talk, won't you, Dave? You can't quit, Curly," says he; "there's too much for you to do out there on the old ranch. Do you suppose you could teach this kid to rope?" says he.

"I already got a start at it," says I. "Him and me used to practice some."

Well now, that was how come us to square it all up, both sides, and come to a understanding that didn't noways seem possible just a little while before. That was how we come to go back to the old Yellow Bull country, for part of the year anyways. It was how a right bad run-in was saved. It was how Old Man Wisner was kept from busting wide open the next day, and, like enough, a bank or so along with him. Likewise it was how them two fortunes, maybe fifty or ninety million or more between them when they got things cleaned up, was joined till death do them part. When them two old fellows got to pulling together something had to crack. We shore got a business now—sever'l of 'em.

What become of the old wall between them two houses? Nothing much; we left it stand, for someways it didn't seem so high no more when Bonnie Bell's ivy and them other plants begun to hang down on it. But, of course, I had to bust the hole in a little bit bigger after a while, so as the twins could get through right easy, as well as Peanut. One was named David Abraham and the other John William; but they couldn't help it.

The best time was when they all rounded up one spring out there at the station to go out on the ranch for the spring round-up, and to start things running for the year. Old Man Wisner and the old lady was there, and Old Man Wright and Jimmie and Bonnie Bell and me—me that was foreman now and, like enough, earning it, the way things had been let go to pieces.

We'd come down from Cody to that station where I found Jimmie—time I was out hunting for him. For a while we'd been quite considerable busy getting things packed, ready to go out to the ranch. We had two wagons, one full of groceries and things. They'd even put in fly screens out there now and had rocking chairs to set around in. Old Man Wright was as busy as a fiddler getting things pulled together. His sleeves was rolled up, and all at once Jimmie looks at him and says:

"Colonel, if I'm not mistaken your freckles is coming back again."

The old man roars laughing at that.

"Yes," he says; "I'm almost fit to run for sher'f once more. Ain't it all like the old times, Curly?" says he.

"It shore is, Colonel," says I; "and there ain't no better times than them."

The old man he gets into the buckboard on one side and he taken the two twins on his knees. On the seat back of him was Pa and Ma Wisner—me riding with Old Man Wright, in the middle. She was a three-seat buckboard, and the mules was full of oats and plunging some; but Jimmie didn't mind—he was driving, with Bonnie Bell on the front seat.

"All set?" says he, turning his haid around; and Old Man Wright nods.

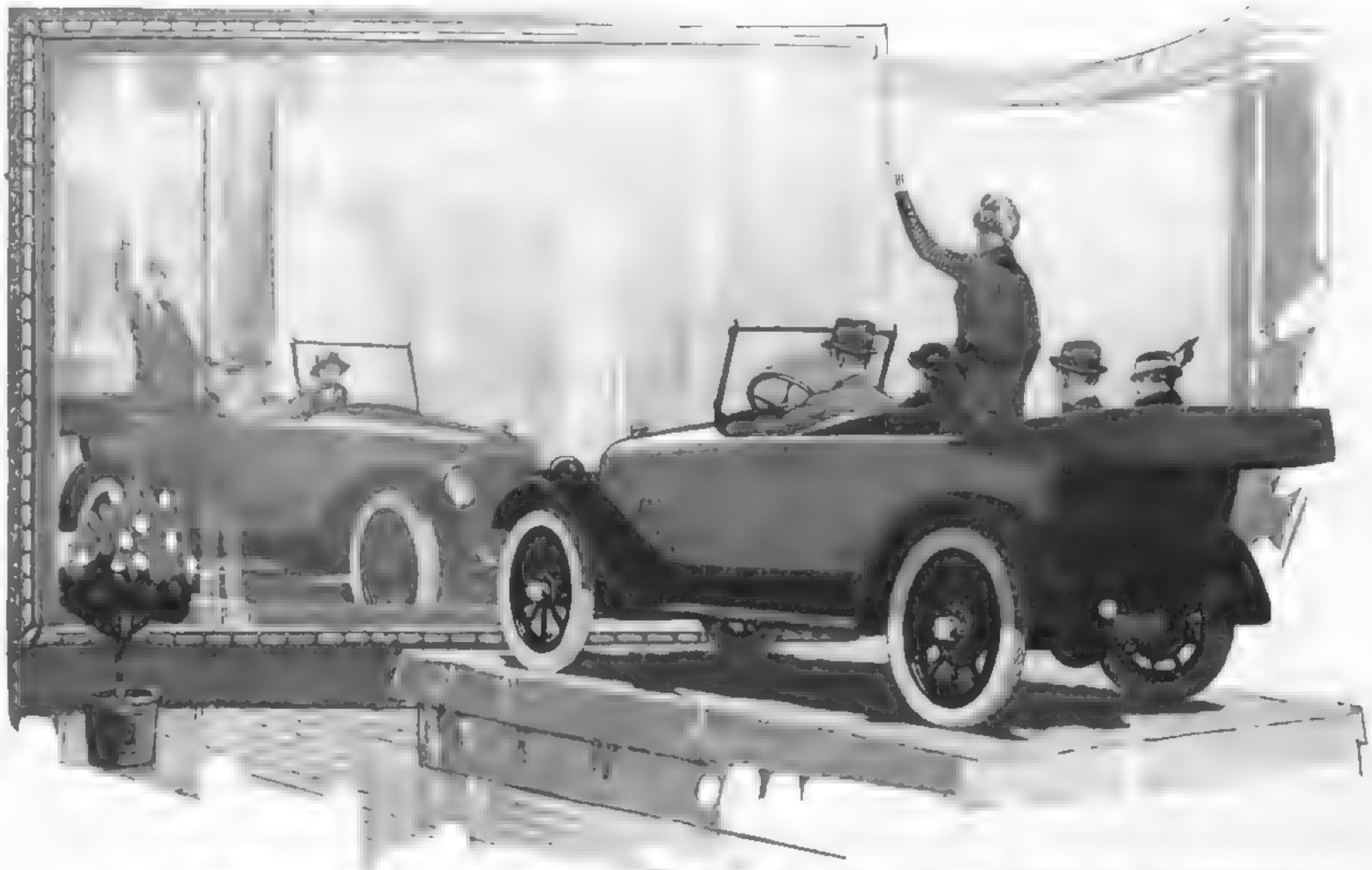
"Giddap!" says Jimmie, and turns 'em loose.

Bonnie Bell, she turns around halfway, half looking at him and half at the twins, and says she:

"Home, James!"

(THE END)

Picture Yourself in this Briscoe Beauty



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POWER—FLEXIBILITY—SMOOTHNESS—ECONOMY—BEAUTY

You'll find them at their pinnacle in this Briscoe Eight.

De Luxe Eight 38

$985

with full equipment and every convenience

Sit at the wheel of a Briscoe Eight and you will feel the thrill of super-power that responds to your touch like a giant held in leash. Yet this power is developed on a remarkably moderate allowance of fuel.

And there's a flexibility of motion that seems to answer your very thought, so quickly does it react to your slightest impulse.

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Deep upholstery and a full cantilever rear spring suspension assure every comfort. The 114-inch wheel base provides ample room. And the car is equipped with everything necessary to your complete enjoyment.

De Luxe Four 38—identical in everything but power plant, $785.

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The Thing Worth While

For thirty-five years the simplifying and perfecting of photography has been the big aim, the thing considered most worth while, the ideal in the Kodak factories. And each measure of success has made further successes possible. Each success has broadened the foundation, has given more in experience and in facilities, with which to work.

Along with the experience that comes to a well trained and efficient organization of long standing the Kodak organization has also the advantages of its own Research Laboratory, one of the largest and best equipped in the world. And this laboratory is not merely a building of brick and mortar to house the instruments of precision. It is a miniature factory where actual manufacturing on a small scale can and does supplement in a practical way the work of the experimenter. Its staff is composed of scientific specialists whose work has developed along photographic lines. Its work is basic, far reaching. It has already done much for and in the future will do more for a scientific knowledge of photography.

The "Know how" that comes from long experience, the practical application of scientific knowledge, an organization in which honest workmanship has become a habit, in which nothing is left to guesswork, a manufacturing plant that provides in a big way for accuracy and efficiency, this is the force that, under intelligent and masterful superintendence, has wrought the marked superiority in

KODAK PRODUCTS

If it isn't an Eastman, it isn't a Kodak.

EASTMAN KODAK CO., ROCHESTER, N. Y., *The Kodak City.*

BEATING THE SUBMARINES

(Continued from Page 25)

was off and away I stayed by the ship for a while; and then, just before the Belle sank, I jumped off the bridge. One of the boats picked me up and I saw several of the crew in the water.

"The submarine had come up, then, and some of the men swam to her and climbed aboard. I pulled alongside her in my boat, intending to take some of my men off and to have another boat get the rest; but one of the submarine officers came out and stuck a big gun in my face and ordered me to shove off or he'd shoot the lot of us. So we had to shove off. Then, when the Belle sank, the submarine dived and left our men in the water. We picked up some of them, but nineteen were lost. It was pretty cold and they got stiff quickly, I guess, after being wet. So when they went in the second time they didn't last long. But I wish we'd 'a' had that gun. We surely would have got that submarine."

It was five o'clock in the evening when we got under way for the dash from Port Said across the Mediterranean. The day had been put to the best possible use in making the ship as fit as could be for that run. The coal that had come aboard was the best the British can supply for such emergencies. The engine-room staff had been busy with their machinery. The skipper had received his orders from the British naval authorities at Port Said, whose business it is to direct the movements of merchantmen through those waters, and we were going out into the danger zone as well prepared as could be. The boats were swung out, lowered to the level of the main-deck rail, and made ready for instant lowering. Water breakers were filled and stowed, and lines run forward and aft to assist in steadying the boats as they went down. There were plenty of boats for our passenger list, but that was not all. At Aden we had taken on twenty or thirty new life rafts. Each was capable of sustaining twenty-five persons and was equipped with water breaker and biscuit box, paddles to supply motion, and lines with hand-holds.

Two Millions in Bullion

It was rather important to the British that this ship should be well prepared. There was half a million sterling in gold bullion in her strong room, shipped up from Australia. There was a detachment of sixty munitions workers among the passengers, coming from Australia to help in the English factories. There were several military details from various points along the way. There was a distinguished lieutenant general, who had done fine service in Egypt and elsewhere, and was going home for transfer to an important command in France. There was a major general, who had been in high place in the Dardanelles' fighting, and there was another general from the Dardanelles, and with them forty or fifty staff and line officers who were going home on leave or for assignment to other duty. Also, there were several naval officers, besides the captain already referred to; so that, considered as a whole, the passenger list comprised a fairly warlike party. In addition there were numerous officials of the civil government of India and other British establishments in the Far East, some of whom were accompanied by their wives and children.

Here we were, a flock of British fighting men, army and navy, together with a large detachment of munitions workers, on an armed vessel, with more than two million dollars in gold in her cargo. We were something of a prize for the submarines if they could get us.

It was blowing up a bit as we left Port Said. Black, angry-looking clouds hung low in the sky and there were occasional squalls of rain. The wind was cold enough to suggest the possibility of snow. Everybody was happy, and there were smiles on the faces of the passengers, even of those who expected to be seasick within half an hour. For, whether rough weather really makes it worse for submarines or not, it is the firm belief of the landlubber that it does; and our landlubbers were quite prepared to endure any sort of weather, no matter how rough, in order to beat the submarines.

And some of the sailormen held to that belief also. The skipper who had been torpedoed only three days before looked out at the gathering smother and exclaimed bitterly: "Why couldn't it have been that way for me?"

"Let 'er blow!" said the red-headed Irishman. "The harder, the better. They can't use the periscope so easily in rough weather. They must come to the surface and then we can see them. And once we catch sight of one, look out for that gun back there!"

He was quite gleeful over the prospect. If his words represented his real feelings the one thing he desired most in life was to have our ship meet a submarine.

"We'll *'strafe'* 'em!" he would declare with Celtic emphasis. "Wouldn't you like to get one, now, just for the experience of the thing?"

But he had not many takers. As a matter of fact, however well some of us might have liked to talk about meeting a submarine, after it was all over we were not really so anxious to do so when there seemed a first-class chance that we should. It is an experience, I fancy, which feels better in retrospect than in the occurrence.

In Case of a Torpedo

Going out of the Canal in the evening, as we did, would bring us into the dangerous water just off Port Said during the night, when submarines are unable to work to advantage. And the weather was promising to be all we could wish. As we passed the De Lesseps statue, near the entrance of the Canal, some of the stewards went round the ship, posting up printed bulletins about the size of an octavo sheet giving instructions to the passengers. If anybody had had the least doubt as to what the officers of the ship felt about the part of the voyage upon which we had now entered, a single reading of this warning served to set that doubt at rest. This is what it said:

"NOTICE!

"Passengers are hereby notified that the signal to PREPARE TO ABANDON SHIP is FIVE SHORT BLASTS ON THE STEAM WHISTLE.

"On hearing this signal passengers are requested to muster WITH THEIR LIFE BELTS ON, at the following places:

"First-saloon passengers on the port side of the first music saloon;

"Second-saloon passengers on the port side of the first-saloon smokeroom;

"Munitions workers, outside the second-saloon smokeroom;

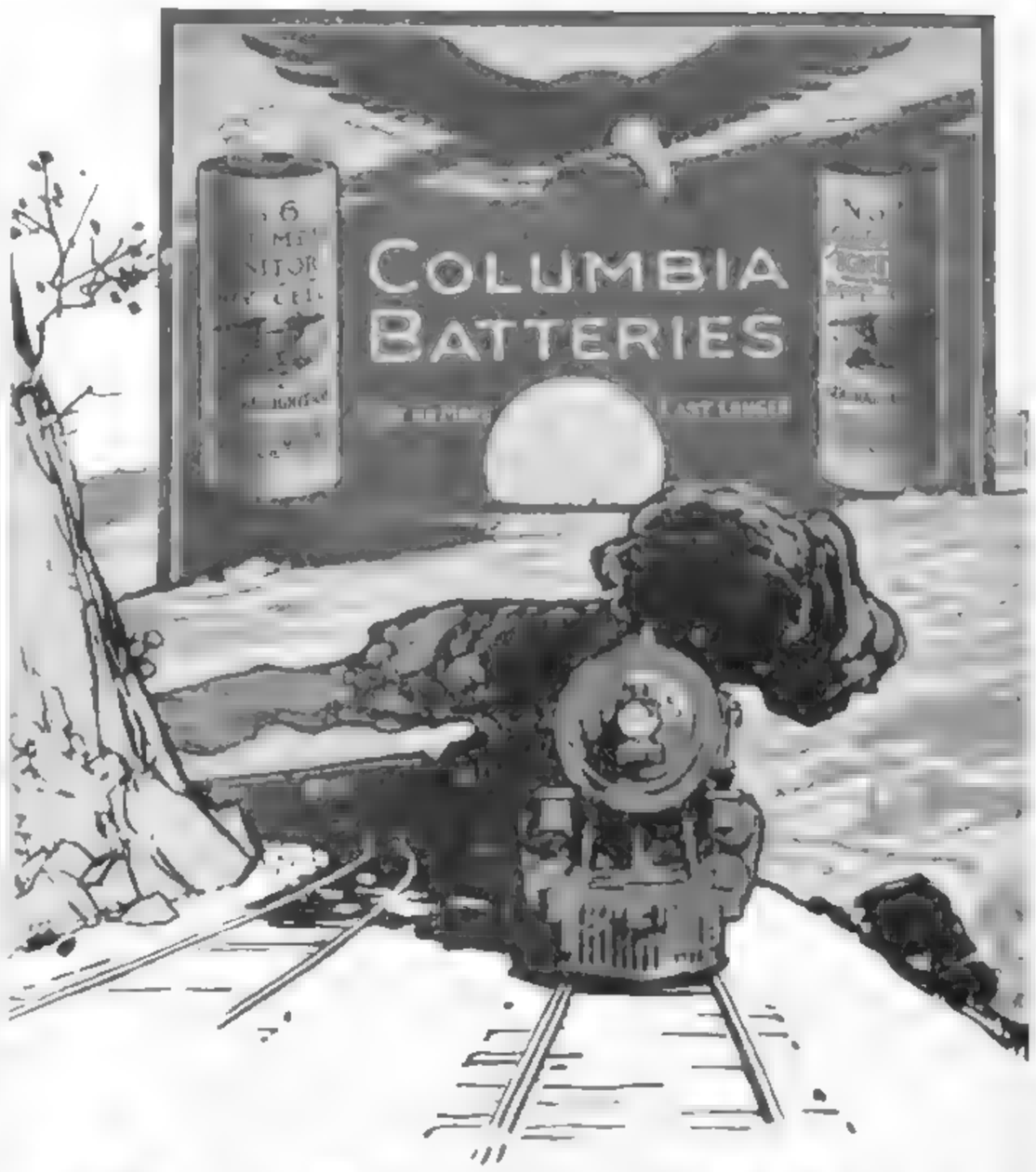
"Military details, on the starboard side of the first-saloon smokeroom.

"The Commander URGENTLY REQUESTS passengers to HAVE THEIR LIFE BELTS WITH THEM AT ALL TIMES—BOTH BY DAY AND NIGHT—while the ship is in the DANGER ZONE."

Copies of this notice were posted on all the bulletin boards, in the music room and smokerooms, and at the head of the main companionway, as well as on deck. There was something businesslike about it. The passengers read it with varied expressions and varied feelings; and then, almost before the breakwater at the entrance of the Canal was out of sight, they began to appear on deck wearing or carrying their life belts. It was apparent that that part of the captain's order was going to be obeyed.

Even before the posting of these notices was completed, a bo's'n's gang was busy stretching heavy tarpaulins over the deck house, forward and aft, completely inclosing the air ports and windows in the music room and smokeroom. Stewards went through all the deck cabins, removing the electric bulbs from the sockets and taking them away from the cabins; so that it was beyond the power of any reckless passenger to turn on his light, no matter how close he drew his curtains and shades. In the cabins below all air ports were covered on the inside with heavy brown paper, making them absolutely opaque. They were closed tight and the locking nuts screwed home, with the wrenches under the charge of one of the chief steward's assistants, so that no passenger could get hold of one and let a ray of light out of his cabin. For ventilation we depended on the regular ship's system and on the electric fans.

We went into the night with the ship absolutely black from the outside. Not a gleam of light showed anywhere. We crossed the Mediterranean without showing a running light for the fraction of a second. The wheelhouse and charthouse were similarly dark, and even the compass light was so hooded that not a ray was visible



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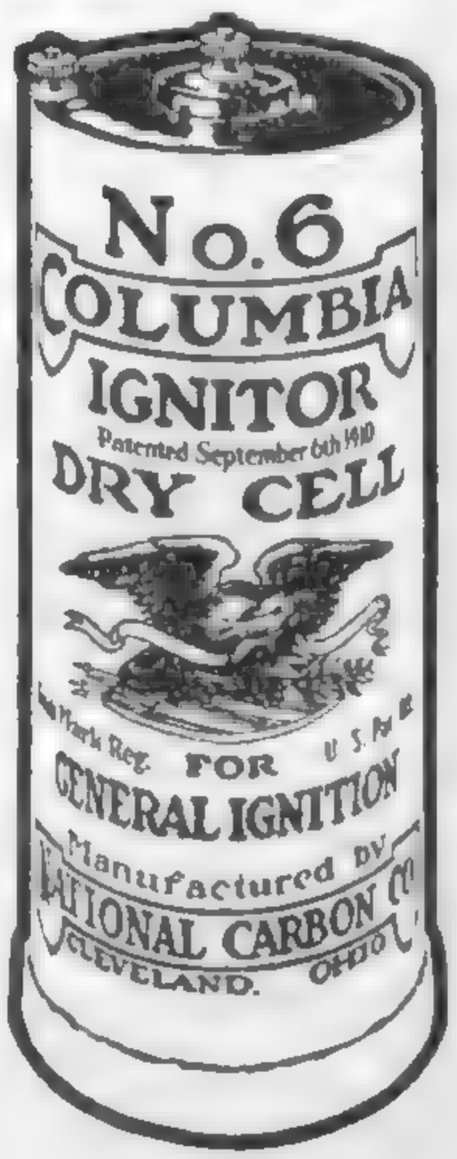
Be Sure It's a COLUMBIA!

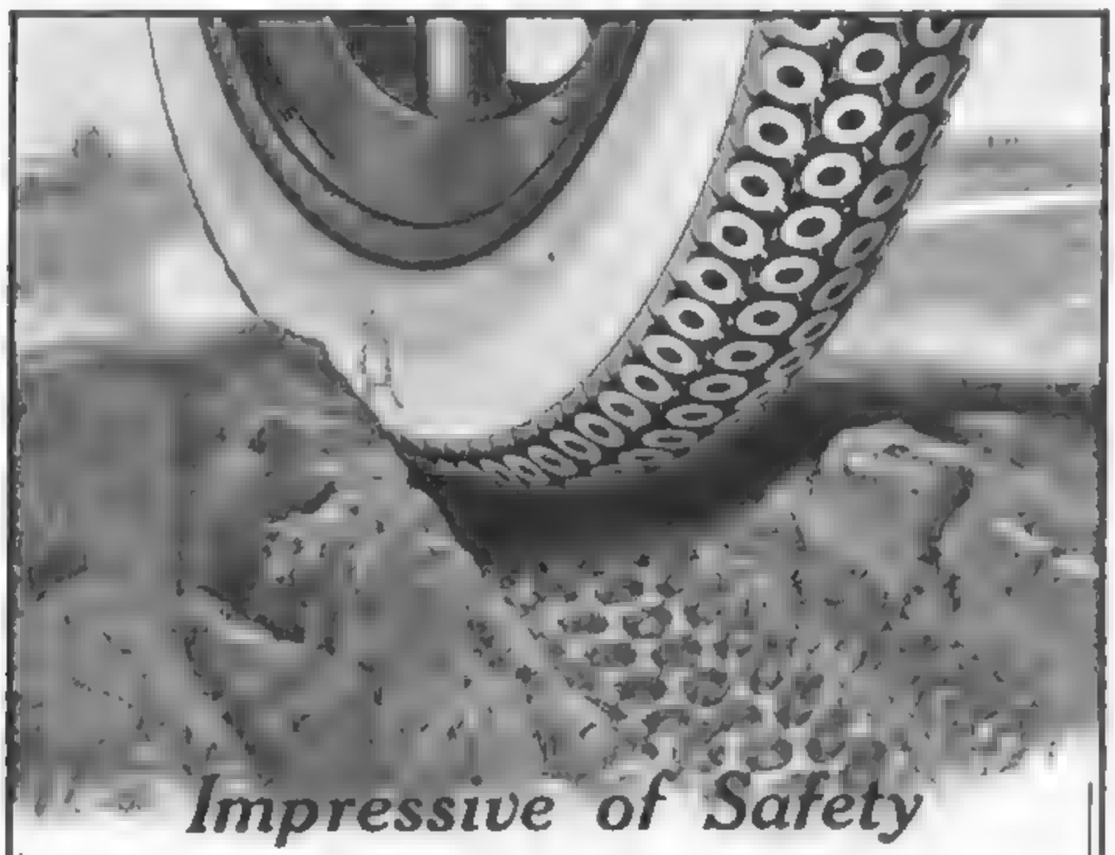
At no extra charge—Fahnestock Spring Clip Binding Posts on Columbia Batteries exclusively

Railroad alarms *must not* fail—so they're run on COLUMBIAS. The steady, sturdy Columbia *goes on duty like a flash.* It gives either a moment's vigorous service, or a long, strong pull, as required. Packed to the very binding posts with energy! Use Columbias for bells, buzzers, autos, motorboats, lanterns, telephones. Wire Columbias into any circuit—*you can trust them to do the work.* Our name and 27 years' experience are your guarantee.



NATIONAL CARBON COMPANY
Cleveland, Ohio

Columbia Batteries are also made in Canada



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ON heavy roads—in soft clay, mud, sand—the sturdy Vacuum Cup Tread thrusts and grips deeply below the surface, preventing loss of traction and side slipping.

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6,000 Miles

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A quality casing with black, ribbed tread, at a moderate price. Guaranteed—per tag attached—for

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A $2000.00 Profit

Without a cent invested

ON THE tenth day of last August, R. J. Dickhout, of Detroit, was out of a job. On the thirty-first day of the same month he had earned $160.00 taking subscriptions for

The Saturday Evening Post
The Ladies' Home Journal
The Country Gentleman

In his second month he added to his earnings $275.00.

By November, Mr. Dickhout had, without a cent invested, built up a business worth from $2000.00 to $3000.00 a year.

We need more men like Mr. Dickhout. Full particulars on request.

Box 403, Agency Division
THE CURTIS PUBLISHING COMPANY
Independence Square Philadelphia

except from directly above it. Entrance to the music room was through the main companionway, which was kept dark as a pocket.

The weather was plenty cold. So we were warned to have our heavy overcoats always handy, and we were instructed especially not to take them to our cabins at night, but to leave them at the head of the main companionway. A great pile of extra blankets was put there, as well, together with a lot of extra life belts. And in this pile of extra preservers there were little ones—specially made for children. It gave one a deeper impression of war, as the submarines make it, to see those little life belts there.

Certain men were detailed to stow overcoats, blankets and life belts in the boats, in case the order to abandon ship was given. It was explained that no one else was to bother about those things, as it would be easy to redistribute them after the boats were away, and there would be plenty for all in the boats. If we were hit each passenger was to get to his deck station as promptly as possible, ready to go to his boat.

The main saloon, on the first evening out from Port Said, presented a very unusual spectacle for ships of that line. Not an officer of the sailing division was at table, and of the other officers who came in to dinner not one was in evening dress. It is a line which has been celebrated all over the world for its swank, and for the fact that it is practically compulsory in the first cabin to dress for dinner. But that evening—and, in fact, every evening while we were in what the notices called the Danger Zone—there was very little togging up. A few of the hardier fellows got into their dinner clothes and three or four of the ladies shifted gowns. But the great majority came to the table in the warmest clothing they had, and almost everybody brought his life belt, rolled up into a bundle, and laid it beside his chair, where it could be grasped instantly if those five short blasts on the steam whistle were heard.

False Alarms for Practice

The music room and smokerooms were well populated the first evening in the Mediterranean. It was curious how certain passengers who always had gone early to their cabins now suddenly developed a fondness for society and a willingness to sit up late. The night owls had an unusual amount of company; in fact, as it transpired next morning, several of the young men, including some who were going home to enlist, spent the entire night on deck. And others, who went to their cabins, turned in all standing and slept in their clothes, so as to be ready for the call the instant it came. But most of the less particular old sinners contented themselves with arranging their clothing fireman fashion, near their berths, so that it could be donned with the least possible delay in case of emergency. One preparation was made, I think, by every passenger on the ship. That was to take jewelry, trinkets, letters of credit, and other small valuables, and put them up in a small packet, which was kept on the person constantly during the day and placed under the pillow or in some other equally handy spot at night.

The signal to abandon ship was given several times while we were in the Mediterranean. Each time warning had been given by notices posted on the various bulletin boards, so that no nervous person should have any unnecessary excuse for fainting or doing anything else foolish when the steam whistle cut loose its five short blasts. The passengers always responded with a rush, even though we knew it was only practice. Everybody seemed to want or need practice in getting quickly to his deck station.

It was a motley crowd that gathered on the port side of the first-saloon music room. A fat man wearing a heavy overcoat, and with a huge life belt outside that, presents an inspiring picture for some purposes, but is liable to be not especially reassuring when the question is that of climbing into a swinging boat from the deck of a ship which has been torpedoed by a submarine. But, at that, he is a pleasanter sight than a group of little children done up in their toy life belts. Something about that made the gorge rise every time it occurred, and does so even yet in recollection. There is an infamy about that which those who are responsible for it can never outlive.

At each of our several practice drills we were all on hand very soon after the signal sounded—men, women and babies in arms.

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The continuous knife-edge electrodes of the Vesuvius Plug, extending into the combustion chamber, give sparks like a "ribbon of flame," exploding all the gas and developing all the power of the motor!

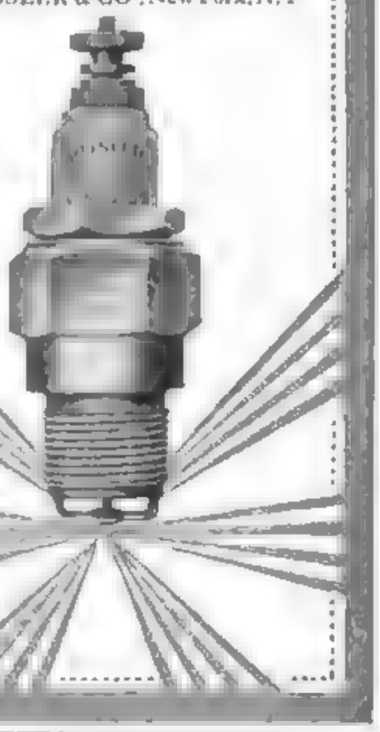
Quality makes the Vesuvius—
"The Indestructible Plug."

Guaranteed to outlast the motor.

$1.00 each, in round metal box.

"Mosler on Spark Plugs" sent free—written by A. R. Mosler, authority on ignition problems—tells the right plug for all motors.

A. R. MOSLER & CO., New York, N.Y.



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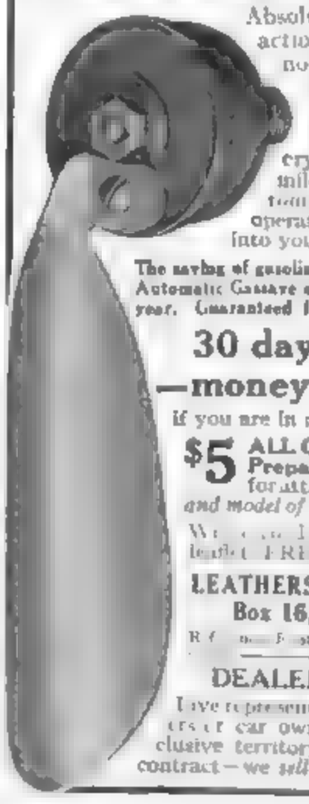

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DEALERS WANTED

Live representatives—either dealers or car owners—can earn exclusive territory by sales. Liberal contract—we *sell* no territory.

The officer of our division inspected us carefully to see that each life belt was properly put on and fitted its wearer properly. The importance of having life belts rightly adjusted and securely fastened was explained and emphasized; and everybody was cautioned over and over again that in case the signal to abandon ship was given in earnest, it was of the utmost importance that each passenger should remain perfectly cool, and should give complete attention and obedience to the orders and instructions from the officers. One could not help admiring the thoroughgoing, businesslike manner in which the officers of the ship gave themselves to the preparations for saving life in case we were submarined, although it certainly did tend to convey the impression that they regarded it as likely that we should be hit.

It was during the before-breakfast constitutional on deck, on the first morning after leaving Port Said, that we noticed another of the precautions for avoiding trouble. Some of us happened to be looking astern when we saw the ship making a sharp turn in her course. When the turn had been completed we observed that it was about forty-five degrees, or four points on the compass. We had all heard of the process of zigzagging to beat submarines. Here we saw it put into practice. In another quarter of an hour we made another similar swing, the two of them constituting practically a right angle.

Presently we swung halfway back again, and in another fifteen minutes made another shift, this time ahead. We were now headed again on the course we were taking when the first shift had been observed, but had traveled some extra miles in making the numerous shifts. All that day, as long as it was light enough to see any distance, the ship kept up that quarter-hour change of course. She did not straighten out on her real path until darkness fell to protect her from the enemy.

The explanation of this which was offered us was that such constant change of course makes it extremely difficult for a submarine to drive home its torpedo, even if it sights its victim. Because, when a submarine commander sights a ship he desires to attack he must first calculate exactly the course she is taking, and the speed she is making, in order to take his own position and to know where to fire his torpedo and at what velocity. Having made this calculation, he dives under water to maneuver for the right position from which to fire. But when he sticks his periscope up again to take another look, on arriving at what he has figured to be his correct position, it is disconcerting and disheartening to find that his victim has changed course, and all his calculating and maneuvering must be done over again. It was asserted very confidently on our ship that vessels had often escaped destruction by that maneuver; and our wise men assured us that, so long as we kept it up, nothing could get us.

Unusual Precautions

Well, we kept it up all day and every day until we were entirely clear of that danger zone; and, in fact, until we were clear of all the danger zones and safely tied up at the docks in London. For Marseilles was only a port of call for our ship, which, having escaped the perils of the first danger zone in the Mediterranean, soon afterward went on through the second, down Gibraltar way, and from there across the Bay of Biscay and on up the Channel into the Thames. To the very end of the voyage all these precautions were kept up. There was no relaxation in vigilance on the part of the officers or in conversation on the part of the passengers.

One part of the precaution taken by the officers is, of course, familiar to all travelers and was to be expected. That was doubling the watch. To be exact, it was more than doubled. Day and night extra men were on lookout at all the possible points of vantage about the ship. And some of the naval officers among the passengers organized a volunteer auxiliary watch of their own, as did some of the soldiers in the party of the distinguished lieutenant general.

But the talk—it was nothing but submarines, morning, noon, evening and night; submarines to the right of us; submarines to the left of us; submarines in front and rear of us. Everywhere, so far as the voice could reach in any direction, there were submarines, with their lethal torpedoes just about to get us. The Mediterranean and the Channel were thick with them—in the imagination of some of the passengers. And always there was an hour, only a little ahead of us, which was the most dangerous hour of all the voyage; and there was a place, only a few miles farther along, which was the most dangerous spot on the whole run.

It was the most interesting form of pessimism I have ever observed. There was always something that we were just about to encounter, but kept constantly escaping. Several times passengers asserted that they had seen periscopes, and by the time the ship reached London there were several explicit accounts of hairbreadth escapes. But this was all among the passengers. The ship's officers saw nothing—at least, nothing they would talk about.

Nobody except the navigating officers of the vessel knew where we were. Soon after noon each day there was posted on the bulletin board the statement that we had run so many miles. No latitude or longitude was ever given, and we could study all the charts and maps in all the atlases in the library to no avail. Nor was it possible to lay a course by the sun in view of the constant shifting. The chart was taken down from the case by the smokeroom, where the run was usually posted. When we passed close to Malta some of the passengers recognized that island and we had that much information; but after that, when we came in sight of land, as we did once or twice, we had to guess what it was. It was not proposed that any of the passengers should know what the course was and be able to give any information concerning it to possible enemies.

Secret Sailing Schedules

The usual run from Port Said to Marseilles is four days. We took five. In peace times you land in London a week after you touch at Marseilles. Our ship reached her London dock nine days after arriving at Marseilles. These deviations from the advertised sailing schedule do not facilitate matters for the submarines. Besides, running through such danger zones puts something of a strain on the engines, and there was reason for a thorough overhaul at Marseilles. Also, there were other preparations to make and a full supply of carefully selected coal to be put on board.

There is another trick in the game of beating the submarines which was played very well by the ship that brought me across the Atlantic from Liverpool. She was advertised to sail on a Wednesday at five P. M. On Tuesday afternoon each person who had booked passage by her received a personal and private notification from her agents that her sailing had been postponed for two days. Of course it would be extremely difficult to get that information to any submarine which might be lying in wait for that particular ship in time to do the submarine any good; but, just to make it a little more certain, she did not sail even at the postponed time. The passengers all went up to Liverpool on Friday and aboard ship. The vessel pulled out of the dock and anchored in the stream. There she waited for orders from the Admiralty. It was thick and cold, with frequent snowsqualls, all day on Saturday—ideal weather for dodging submarines; but the Admiralty did not give the word to go until that evening. Then we went out into the murk at top speed.

At the bow of the ship there was posted a double lookout. In the crow's nest there were two lookouts. In a special crow's nest, fifty or more feet farther up the foremast, were two more. On the main bridge were six men and on the after bridge there were two. It might be said a good lookout was kept on that ship.

Lights were restricted as they had been in the Mediterranean and at night it was as dark as a pocket on deck. Literally you could not see your own hand six inches in front of your face. One day and one night of this brought us far enough out into the deep Atlantic to be out of the real danger zone and the lookout was not so heavy as at first.

In other ways there was a slight relaxation, also; most significant of all, and most pleasant to the passengers, the boats, which had been swung out from their chocks and lowered even with the upper-deck rail, were hauled back into their places and made fast there. That was the sure sign that the officers of the ship no longer counted the submarines much of a menace on that voyage. We had beaten them out.

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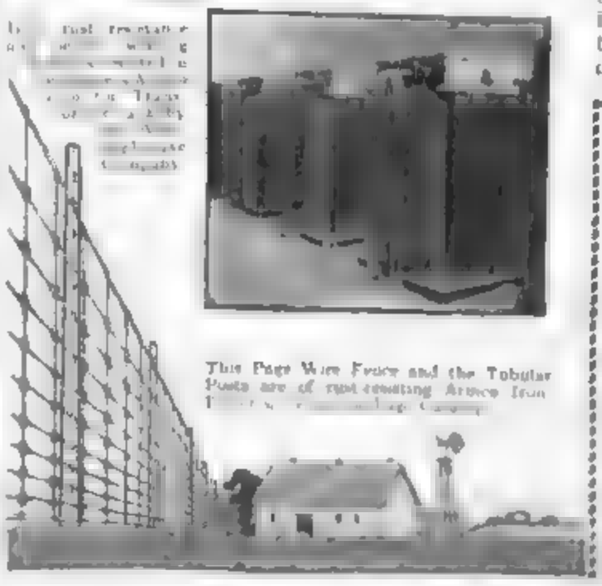

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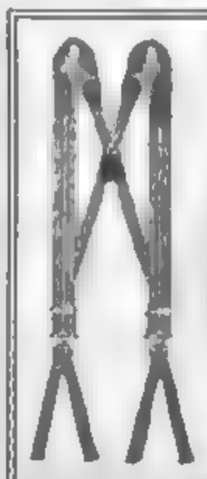

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THE GIRL WHO MARRIED NEW YORK

(Continued from Page 8)

equivalent to that which she had left. And she knew to a dot how, when a newcomer appeared in its midst, such a coterie worked. A dozen times in Wellesville she had watched outsiders grow to be insiders; and, with the proper kind of people, in a set of this sort, the process was sure.

Of course the thing was not accomplished in a day, but inevitably and naturally it always came about. There was true enough—an ultimate basis of affiliation to which an outsider never attained. Out in Wellesville, for example, Butlers and Fowlers, and the like, had an interrelation that was quite special and their own. Norma assumed that the Potters and a few others were likewise particularly bound together by particular ties. But for all practical social purposes—dances, dinners, theater parties—that would make no difference; at least, so Norma thought.

Soon she would know who was who's cousin, who had married whom, the foibles of others, their pastimes and pleasures, and how many children they had. Then she, too, would call the woman across the table Fanny and there would no longer be mystery concerning Jimmy and his game. She would have become an insider, knowing the thousand and one little intimate facts that were the common coin of the group. Telling herself she was on familiar and sure social ground, and that, even if she was still an outsider, she would not remain so for long, she turned attention to what the man beside her was saying.

Time was needed in which to teach Norma the wide differences between social viewpoint in New York and social viewpoint in Wellesville. All these differences she was eventually able to trace back to a matter of size. As in the first days and weeks following her arrival, she contended with forces of which she had no understanding. In her unequal struggle there were many times when her bitterness against others overflowed like a poison into her life, but in the end she was able to view the circumstances through which she passed not as manifestations of utter heartlessness, but as outworkings of the vast and multitudinous character of the giant city. She forgave individuals, but she never forgave New York.

Cold and Casual Friends

That which she first encountered was casualness. A sense of it initially touched her when she and Taylor were in a taxicab on their way home after the Potter dinner. It came over her then that in a vague, odd way there had been something wrong that evening. Norma felt that she herself had carried off her part beautifully. The dinner had been a high function, but the girl had been equal to it to its last ceremonial inch; equal to the talk about polo on one side of her and equal to opera on the other; equal to a disconcerting amount of appraising scrutiny and the deftly made opportunity Mrs. Potter had given her for a moment of the general attention. She had been equal to everything; no possible reproach for her part. But—had the Potters and the Potter friends played theirs?

Everyone had been scrupulously polite. It was not that. The right things, the expected things, the conventionally correct things, had been said to her. It was, rather, a question of manner, of inflection, of glance. Had any of them really considered whether they would ever see her again? Did her appearance in their midst actually count or was it the merest incident? Was anyone remarking at that very moment, while she was on her way home, that it was going to be fine having the new Mrs. King around? Was anyone thinking of her at all? Had there been one single hint, for all their finished manners, that they realized she was to be a part of their lives as they lived them from day to day? Had her appearance been even in the least trivial degree an event? She wondered; and just a little wistfully craved some of the genial warmth Merridew Avenue would have had for a strange newcomer.

"My dear child," said Aunt Sylvia to her the next day, "New York's the most offhand place in the world. Nothing—absolutely nothing—is an event here. Maybe that's because everything is so much of an event. I don't think so, though. Anyhow there's not another place where to a score of people your coming would not have been an event; where people you had met would not count on seeing you again and again, and would not treat you accordingly. But not here! The place is big and people know how big it is. One evening a man sits beside a girl at dinner; the next day an apartment house is torn down; the girl disappears.

"People here do just that—simply disappear, get swished away by chance, accident—and are never heard of again. That's common experience; and unless you're rockribbed into the town, into a clique like the Potter clique, in some particular, special way—by blood, by marriage, by property, by business—no one will regard your coming, meeting you, as an event. It isn't an event. On the contrary, it would surprise most New Yorkers to encounter you again. You say good night; you walk out of the door; the assumption is that you're gone—lost, inundated, swallowed up in the vastness of the town. Naturally enough folks here are offhand and have forgot the gentle gift of a warming welcome."

Norma's Eyes Begin to Open

Lack of warmth—that was what Norma began continually to feel. At first, either people were too preoccupied or too busy, or else they were indifferent. She found few comfortable, whole-souled contacts, such as she had always known. There were a good many hours when, a little forlorn, she did tremendously wish someone would ever so slightly mother her. But Mrs. Potter either did not have the time or didn't care, or the idea that Norma might need a staying hand did not occur to her. Nor did it apparently occur to anyone else, and the girl used to spend long afternoons writing letters home, which later she generally concluded were too self-revealing to be sent.

But all this was not a very actual or a very deep tragedy; and meantime the girl believed that, normal foot by normal foot, she was fitting into the Potter coterie exactly as she had expected she would. Matters were proceeding easily and naturally, as they would have proceeded in Wellesville, and she thought she had a good, stout grip on her future. Following the Potter dinner several altogether delightful young matrons had called and there were teas, dinners, box parties, to which Norma was invited.

"Oh, I'm going now—I've found friends—my kind of friends, the friends I wanted," she jubilated to Taylor's aunt.

"Wait," returned Mrs. Pringle; "they'll play with anyone for a few months. It's a cold town and it's a tricky one too."

But Norma was not disturbed. Invitations kept coming; she and Taylor managed one or two successful little dinners of their own; her confidence was entire and serene. It may have been because of that confidence, it may have been because the Potters and the Potters' friends seemed to promise a life as complete as she could have desired, it may have been merely a reaction of her honest Wellesville soul after it had been thrown against New York; but in any case, at about this time in her career Norma came to a decision. She had appraised the Scudders and found them dross; she had scrutinized that for which they stood and found it cheap and empty. The girl determined that in the rounding of her existence she did not want them, and that, lest she become further involved with them, she would jettison them without delay.

Following the party upon the evening of Norma's arrival in New York, there had been other excursions upon the town with that amiable and most cordial pair. With each one of these the girl's understanding of the open life of the city had grown. She had come to realize that many of those delectable little dinners to which she had looked forward—the nice, chic, innocent kind of thing—were not so nice and chic and innocent after all. Upon occasions, glancing round the great, gleaming dining rooms of the public restaurants, watching the flushed, strident groups at the tables, she had wondered whether such inordinate quantities of wine were necessary lubricants

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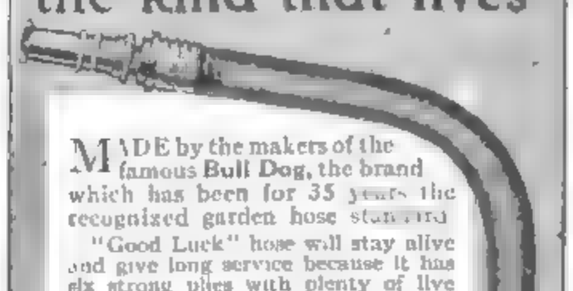

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for such occasions. What most impressed her, however, was its inanity, shallowness and wastefulness. Instinctively she turned from the Broadway *milieu*, and in turning from that turned from the Scudders also. From the very first she had had misgivings concerning these people. Night after night, it seemed, they forsook their upper West Side flat and plunged headlong into the glittering sea of the Tenderloin. Shortly Norma had been able to perceive why it was that the Scudders rarely remained at home. They were folk without social background in the city or particular brains or taste. High rentals, small homes, lack of friends and resources within themselves, drove them to seek entertainment where the only card of admission was a purse. They were nobodies, social derelicts.

"Why, Taylor," Norma cried to her husband, "there's nothing—nothing at all—for us with them! They're not our kind. Catch Harold Potter leading such a life as Paul Scudder leads! He's something better to do. Oh, it's perfectly clear what the Scudders are. They are floaters here, with no foothold at all; futile nonentities—just the well-to-do riffraff of New York."

"Very well, my dear," meekly acquiesced Taylor; "but they're very keen to know us."

"Of course they are," replied the girl; "but, with so many more worth-while people here to choose from, why cultivate them? And besides, I think to go round with them much is stultifying."

There was one more party.

"That's the end!" declared Norma as she and Taylor parted from the other couple at a dank, chill hour close upon dawn. "Let's forget Paul Scudder and all that he means."

"Better be careful," later cautioned Sylvia Pringle. "Those people are victims of bigness and you may be a victim of bigness yourself some day. You can never tell; and then it would be with you as with the other victims—you'd have only those things to do that the town offers its victims."

"But I shan't be a victim—we've the Potters."

"You may have the Potters! But does it ever occur to you that the Potters, on their part, may have someone else?"

"Oh, that's another story," retorted Norma. "Potters or no Potters, I shouldn't want as friends people so vapid as the Scudders, leading lives as silly as theirs. They've been a huge disappointment."

An Old Wellesville Friend

Norma was well-nigh impervious and her seeming success at the time carried her buoyantly along. There were jolts, however—strange symptoms of the manner in which the city worked—which now and again did give her pause. After an odd adventure with Marjory Henley she was actually thoughtful for several days. Upon a day about this time Norma bethought herself of her old Wellesville friend. It had occurred to her that the other might before then have looked her up, but she made the excuses for Mrs. Henley which experience had taught her and set forth to search out the girl she had known so well.

In Wellesville Norma and Marjory, without being intimate, had been close friends. Mrs. King journeyed to the Henleys' upper West Side apartment without the smallest idea that the former relation would undergo change in New York. Marjory welcomed her cordially. They fell to talking of New York, and Mrs. Henley asked Norma whom she knew in the city. Norma mentioned Mrs. Potter.

"Mrs. Potter? Mrs. Potter?" The other searched her mind. "I don't believe I've ever heard of her. But, tell me, do you or your husband know Mrs. Frusk?"

Norma was afraid that neither she nor Taylor did—had not heard of her, in fact.

"That's funny," laughed Marjory shortly. "I thought everyone at least knew about Mrs. Frusk. But, then, New York's a big place!"

That was all there was to it; but from then on Norma began to feel a certain inaccessibility in her one-time friend, which she was at a loss to explain. It was not that she was cool, but at that moment something seemed mysteriously to die out of Mrs. Henley's attitude and feeling; a spark was gone; friendship had dwindled to acquaintanceship in the twinkling of an eye.

"Good-by," said Mrs. Henley as she closed Norma into the elevator vestibule. "I hope sometime I'll see you again."

(Continued on Page 69)

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All are features that you want. Some you would sadly miss. But they are expensive. And only a most efficient factory can include them in a fair-price car.

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In this New Mitchell these 26 extras are paid for by factory savings.

In 13 years we have developed here a remarkable motor car plant. Every building, machine and method is a model for scientific cost reduction.

John W. Bate, the efficiency expert, has devoted years to this project. This New Mitchell car, under old conditions, would cost twice what it costs here today.

We build 98 per cent of the car. And we save enough, through Mr. Bate's genius, to add on these 26 features. Go see them and judge if you want them.

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There's another side to Bate efficiency methods which means as much as the savings.

Mr. Bate for 30 years has specialized on metal-working lines. His effort has been to make parts more efficient—lighter, simpler, stronger.

He displaces castings—heavy and brittle—with three-times-as-strong drop forgings. Also with tough steel stampings, shaped to give maximum strength.

This is the tendency in all fine cars, of course. But we have had the master here. The New Mitchell car contains 184 drop forgings and 256 steel stampings. Nearly all displaced cruder parts.

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Mitchell cars with these Bate improvements are the marvels of Motordom in their endurance.

We know of six Mitchell cars which have averaged 164,372 miles each. That's 30 years of ordinary service. And they are running still.

The Mitchell is called "The Engineers' Car." So many noted engineers have selected it as their personal car. Your Mitchell dealer has a long list of them—all men of nation-wide fame.

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You will find here 400 of these Bate perfections, in addition to the 26 extras.

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Big loads or light loads, pavements or rough roads, all seem the same on these springs. Jolts are obliterated. No shock absorbers are needed. This car rides ruts as a boat rides waves.

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This New Mitchell body, with its new-style equipment, was designed after the New York Shows. The ablest designers exhibited there 257 new models. The Mitchell "Six of '16" was one.

Then we completed this Mid-Year Model, out April 15. The body lines follow what was considered the handsomest Touring Car at the Shows, and it combines all the new features, in design and equipment, which were voted the best at the Shows.

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(Continued from Page 67)

It was Mrs. Pringle who explained:

"Certainly, my dear; you're the last person she would want to know in New York. With a different group, with different people, she is doing precisely what you are—fighting for a foothold, for a semblance of life here. It's a stern, hard fight for anyone. It's almost a law of necessity, of self-preservation, that compels her to seek established folk. The very fact of your Wellesville origin is against her ever taking up the old friendship again. Oh, yes; it's one of the city's commonest outrages—breaking up old friendships."

Norma regretted the loss of Marjory Henley, but she did not particularly consider the defection as reducing the possibilities of a brimming existence. She was still riding upon the full tide of the Potter set, and that was enough life for her.

It was about this time when she paused and took account of New York. One side of the city had turned out to be a cheat; the town had broken up an old friendship. Her vision was a little dimmed, but not perceptibly. She still thought it a wondrous place; she was still sorry for girls in Wellesville; she was far from ruing her marriage to Taylor King.

"It's the life!" she told herself as she woke one morning early in March. And then a few moments later she picked up a newspaper; a headline caught her eye. "The Potter Ball!" she read, and stared at the lengthy list of invited guests. It had been a large and brilliant occasion. Neither she nor Taylor had been asked.

That was the beginning. Of course what followed was an actual tragedy. It made the girl who might have had Wellesville at her feet a virtual outcast; it stripped all vestiges of glory from her bright, shining vision of New York and left it bare. All that remained was the lurid, sordid thing which the Scudders represented. That which she had spurned was all she could have; only the shoddy was at her command.

"It's awful!" she cried later to Sylvia Pringle. "Only the Scudders will take me, and the Scudders I won't have."

"They're all you'll get," Mrs. Pringle told her then with grim brevity, "if you get anything or anybody at all. They're all any girl gets who's not rock-ribbed into this town as you were rock-ribbed into Wellesville."

"But why? Why?"

"Because they're the only people you've anything in common with."

"That's just it—they're the last people I've anything in common with."

"You're wrong, Norma. Don't you see? You've become a derelict too."

From Bad to Worse

But this talk was later and after the full measure of Norma's calamity had been revealed to Norma. That revelation, however, came quickly enough. From the very day following the Potter ball matters happened; or, rather, as the girl said, refused to happen. Invitations to certain houses ceased; to houses in general slackened. Teas grew fewer, dinners farther apart, box parties and dances less frequent. Cards did not pile up in the little silver tray in the hall and by the hour she listened vainly for her telephone to ring. People had other engagements when she and Taylor asked them to dine. With every week the catastrophe took more definite form. Utterly perplexed, the girl would sit in the expensive solitude of her home searching for a clew to what had gone wrong.

It was all beyond her. Without vainglory, she knew that she was every bit as engaging, well-bred, good-to-look-upon a person as any of the women who had gradually ceased to manifest consciousness that she was alive.

It was not Taylor, either. From the first opportunity she had noted carefully her husband's apparent relations with his one-time friends. He called them all by their first names; they called him by his and treated him as one who knew the thousand and one things they knew. There had been, as she later thought, an occasional hint of superciliousness to him in some proud lady's glance, a little less than wholly considerate turning of some invulnerable gentleman's back. But it had not been much—oh, really, less than nothing at all! No; her failure could not be blamed to Taylor.

But failure it was and very complete. By April there were no teas, no dinners, no box parties. Everything had ceased. A vile month succeeded. Before it was over, any lingering hopes the girl may have had were dead. Nothing had turned out as she had expected, as it would have turned out in Wellesville. She realized then and most acutely that she had been living in a silly, gilded Paradise, and had failed to comprehend in the least the social fabric of the Potter set. Of one conclusion, and only one conclusion, was she sure: the Potters dwelt upon a social planet æons removed from Wellesville. She had thought she had been upon familiar ground; she had found herself in a strange, unknown country where nothing worked according to the rules she had been taught and had reckoned upon.

Of course it was Mrs. Pringle who gave her the answer.

"It's all so different, my child, from Wellesville," she began. "I know those nice little cities and I love 'em. There's nothing complicated or difficult about living in them, or about their social creeds. And they always protect the individual. You do a lot of talking about not taking up this person or taking up that. But you always do; in the long run you never leave anyone definitely alone; you really couldn't if you wanted to without being horribly uncomfortable yourselves half the time. All that actually counts is a right standard of breeding and presentable manners. Nothing else much matters—can't matter. It's as easy and spontaneous and simple as the day. But in New York nothing is easy, nothing is spontaneous, nothing is simple. It's big."

The Potter Philosophy

And the city-hardened old lady then told the girl from Wellesville the high secret of the Potter philosophy. It was, she said, a mere reflection of the philosophy of New York. Though it cleared Norma's mystery, it did not immediately make it any easier for her to stare, of an evening, into her permanently cased-up fireplace and think of those chic little dinners and charming little dances of which she had dreamed, proceeding so unconsciously, so merrily, without her. What the philosophy all came to was that, with folks like the Potters, in New York one must have something to offer—something to trade.

"Of course Taylor was a fool," snapped Mrs. Pringle. "He should have known that, with that crowd, the moment he married he was dead. As a single man he had something to trade; as a married man he's bankrupt. It might have been different if he had really belonged to that set. But he didn't; he was merely one of the army of pleasant-mannered, nice youths who are useful to fill in at dinner parties, to dance with, to flirt with, to play bridge with. To be a detached, engaging young man is a social asset. Taylor had that asset but nothing else. As for you—well, for a few months the Potters and the Potter crowd looked you over. Then they decided that you didn't have anything to offer, and they dropped you as if you both had been diseased. Nothing to trade—there's your answer!"

Norma protested that they did have something to trade—that each of them decidedly had.

"You mean that you're both well-bred, well-dressed, intelligent people, who in almost any community in the world would be counted decidedly well worth while knowing?" asked Aunt Sylvia with contemptuous pity. "Well, you are—you're just that. But with a clique like the Potter clique that's nothing. If you or Taylor had a great deal of money, or if either one of you was a celebrity, or you were very witty, or promised something in the way of amusement or profit—they might let you play with them. Otherwise, they ask themselves, Why trouble with you? It's no advantage to be just a well-bred, well-dressed, intelligent person. They can find all the well-bred, well-dressed, intelligent people they can possibly keep up with right within their own borders. They're overrun with them."

"And what, I should like to know," demanded Norma indignantly, "have those people themselves got so conspicuously to trade?"

"Oh, caste," answered Mrs. Pringle lightly; "the noble privilege of being arrogant and snobbish and letting all the little Mrs. Kings of the city see how marvelously exclusive a New York set can be."

"Oh, sickening!"

"Yes, I suppose so," acknowledged Mrs. Pringle. "But, I wonder, isn't that very

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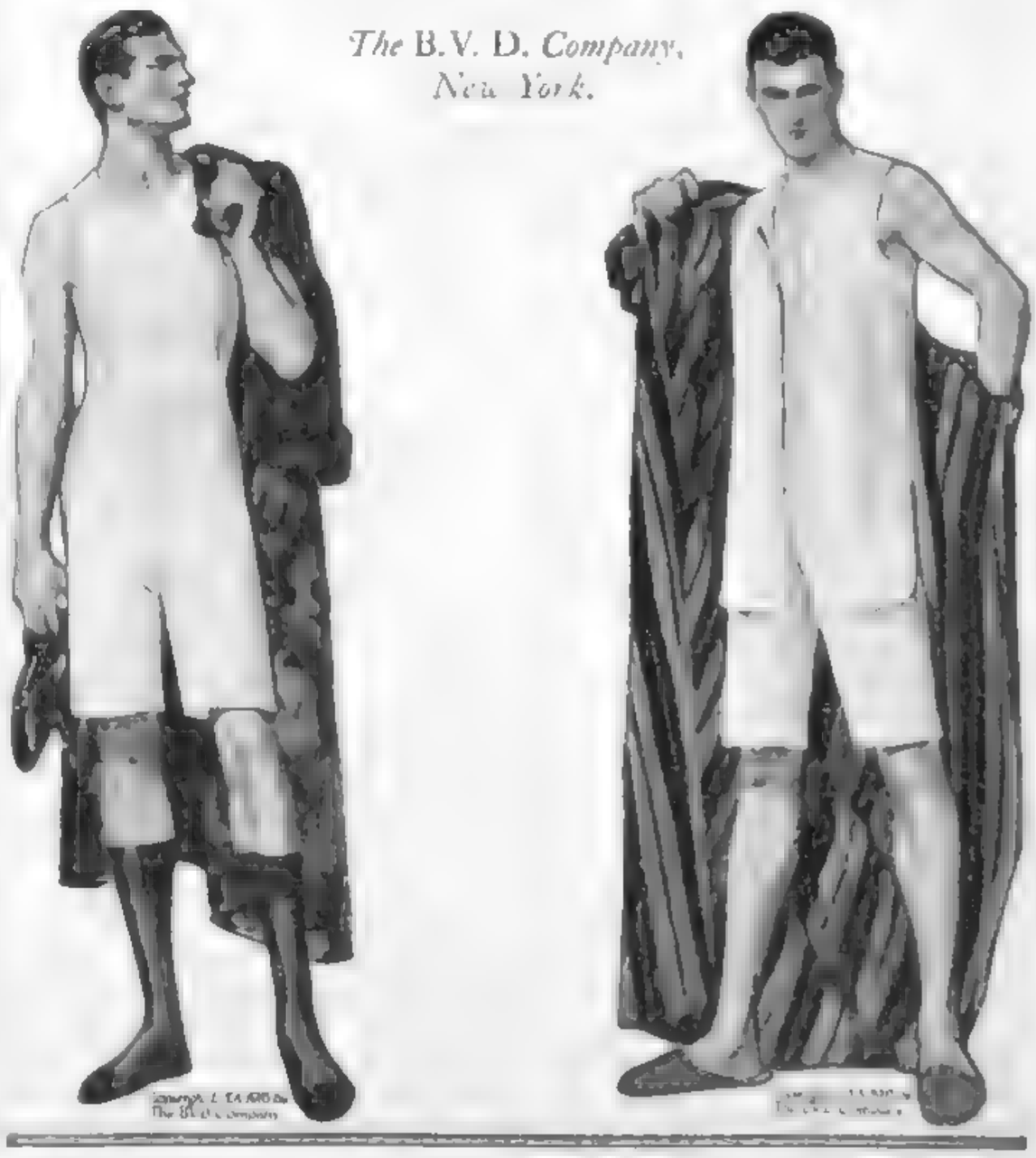

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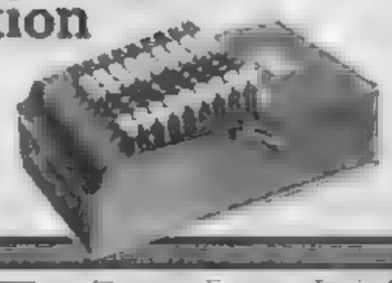

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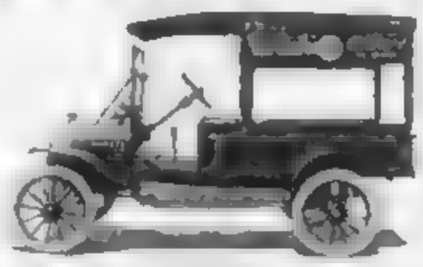

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human? Isn't it a good deal more a question of, as they say, getting away with it? How about Wellesville? Don't you suppose that a dozen or so of your fine old established families would be very well pleased if they could get their noses away up in the air and be sure of keeping them there?"

"Not a bit of it—at the price of trampling a perfectly nice young girl under their feet."

"Well, perhaps that's true. But the difference is that in Wellesville you'd have to gaze upon the perfectly nice girl after she had been trampled. Nothing unpleasant like that after the trampling's been done in New York! Here the corpse is removed, but out your way it isn't. There you're always running into people—on the street, in the banks and offices, clubs and homes; no one there can help meeting everyone else. Let your mother snub a lady and she's pretty certain to meet her the next day in the jeweler's shop. In Wellesville you can't escape and you can't dodge! But New York, with its bigness, lets people be high and mighty and cruel and comfortable all at the same time. And it's against that very vastness, my child, that you've tripped and fallen. Oh, this is a cruel and fiendish monster—this town; it offers you what you least desire, it takes from you what you have, it refuses you what you want, and it forces upon you that which you loathe."

"The Scudders?"

The Pringle Verdict

Time and again during the period that succeeded Norma wanted to run, to give up her fight with the town and return to Wellesville, for which she yearned. Once Mrs. Pringle came in upon her and found her tossing her belongings pellmell into a traveling bag.

"I'm going away—I'm going home," Norma explained.

"A visit, I presume?"

"Call it what you please. I'm going. I'm licked! I'm through!"

"But Taylor—how about him? He can't go too. He's chained here by his job. The city enticed him and has got him fast—like millions of other young men."

"Well, it hasn't got me!" exclaimed Norma.

"Oh, yes, it has; and you're just as tightly held."

"How?"

"With moral chains." She let that simmer a moment before she added: "What have you done to Taylor's life? What had he before you came? He was strong enough to fight this town alone; he wasn't strong enough to fight it for two. Don't blame him. Blame New York. For you the charm of the city's gone; the dazzle has faded—I know all that. But you mustn't forget, my dear, the central fact of your case. Remember that, after all, you did marry New York."

"And when I did I was false—miserably false—to my destiny."

She put this forward as a kind of argument, to which she got this reply:

"All the more reason, child, why you must be true to yourself."

Norma stayed then, as, after similar outbursts of revolt, she always did. But she was convinced that her struggle was vain and that, without tremendous forces of alliance or wealth, New York was as invincible as it was cruel.

Everything worked out as Mrs. Pringle had indicated. After the Potter fiasco Norma began her contest with loneliness. It was a grim battle she had, and it went on day after day, week after week, for months. The strain of it was not lessened by the bustle and activity of the outer aspects of the city. That bustle and glitter constantly reminded her of the pass to which she had come. Each day, too, was harder to endure than the one before it. She would wake in the mornings and forthwith find herself depressed at the prospect of the day before her; knew it would be no different from the scores of other days that had preceded it. This depression was not lessened through the hours that followed by the thought of what her friends out in Wellesville were doing—golfing together; running in and out of their neighbors' homes; gossiping; planning parties; clipping in their rose gardens. She could think of them busy, occupied, taken out of themselves by numberless small activities. Her heart would then grow hungry for a multitude of things, which before had been the

(Continued on Page 73)

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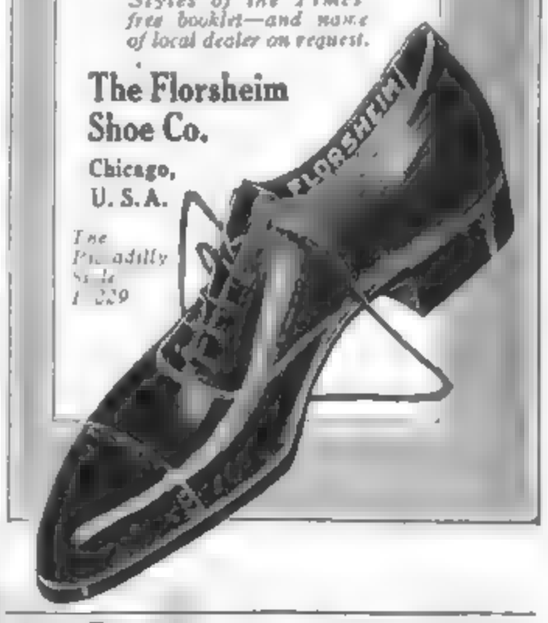

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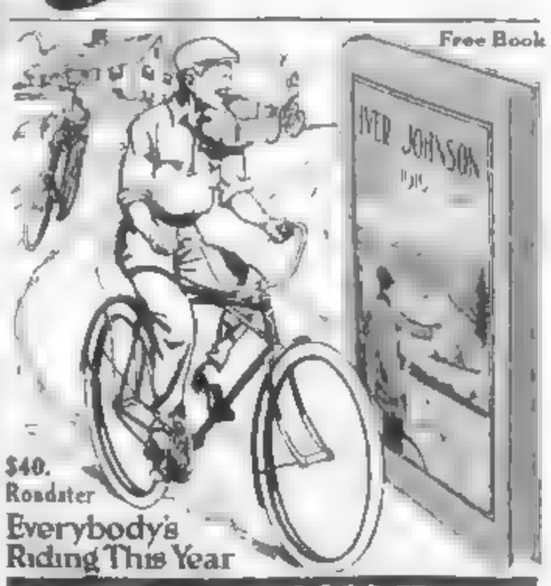

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35	34.75	34.75	5.90
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(Continued from Page 70)

commonplaces of her life, and which she had never prized: Fresh green grass, clean bracing air, friendly faces in the streets and shops, a little gossip at every corner; and she would listen to the sullen mumble of the city and go weakly at its threat, and wonder whether all of her life was to be as it was then.

Her existence was simply a succession of flat, idle days, in which no one hunted her up and when there was no one for her to hunt up. Matters became worse. Week after week the stagnant loneliness and idleness the city had forced upon her continued relentlessly. Her dejection and listlessness became positive ailments.

"Certainly you're sick, my child," said Mrs. Pringle. "Sick with the loneliness of New York. It's a real disease."

And Norma—roving from room to room of her home, trying to read, trying to eat, trying to find something—anything—to do, trying to exist—thought so too. She began to cry a good deal of the time. Evening after evening Taylor, returning home, found her in the thick shadows of the living room, a handkerchief at her eyes. He was in acute distress.

"But what can I do?" he would ask. "I'm powerless. I've my living to make."

"Yes, yes; I know!" Norma would choke. "But how about me? I can't—I simply can't—go on like this. I must find something to do, somebody to see. I must have just a little life! I always had plenty and now I have none. Loneliness like this is death."

When the Climax Came

In due course a climax came. It had been a horrible day. Rain and sleet had not only deepened the girl's gloom but kept her indoors. One dead hour had succeeded another dead hour. Norma had been unable to lie down, unable to sit still. The full venom of New York's loneliness had seemed to seep along her nerves. Early in the afternoon she fell to thinking of Wellesville—of Merridew Avenue, where girls at that very moment had probably rolled back carpets and were dancing; of her friends and the warm comfortableness of everything. She got out an album filled with snapshots taken before she had married. Presently her eyes dimmed so with tears that she could barely see the photographs. However, there was one which, despite her tears, she could clearly discern. It was of Tom Fowler. The album closed with a bang.

She dropped into a chair and began recreating her old vision of what life in New York was to have been. With a hard smile, she remembered how she was to have moved brilliantly through the round of Potter activities; how stimulating people—artists, celebrities, and the like—were to have been her friends; how she and Marjory Henley were to have had friendly reminiscent hours together; and how she was to have sipped at the sparkling life of the town. But heartlessness and indifference had intervened, and the sparkling life had turned out to be sordid and gross. That brought her to the Scudders again. If she was to have even the semblance of life the Scudders were her sole chance.

There was, to be sure, the alternative of loneliness, but that was no life at all; for a full-blooded, animated girl it was annihilation. Besides, the memory of months, weeks, days, the deep dejection of that very moment, told her that that choice was too appalling. She felt she could endure no more vile, tasteless hours. But was that loneliness—the loneliness of New York—going to drive her to nothing more worthwhile and stimulating than the society of Scudders, of derelicts? It seemed not only harsh but incredible that out of the brimming rich life of New York a girl from Wellesville could pluck only that. Better not pluck at all, she argued; but uprose again the memory of what she had endured to tell her that, whether she wished to or not, she must choose. The telephone rang, with Taylor on the wire.

"My dear," he said, "you'll die if you don't get out of that flat! We'll dine tonight with the Scudders. Just give the word."

She faltered and her voice broke a little as she gave assent. That was her surrender.

"Perfectly natural, perfectly natural," Mrs. Pringle told her. "The bigness of New York made you a derelict here, and now with the derelicts you must go."

From then the progress of the Kings was gradual, but it was everlastingly sure; inch by inch they were sucked into the maelstrom of Longacre Square. It was a tragic picture they made, but one which, for Norma, was blurred by excitement and fatigue. In the beginning they did not issue forth upon the town more than once or twice in the week. But an evening of hilarity, terminating close upon dawn, made a quiet evening at home succeeding doubly hard, and with Norma and Taylor the thing grew. No great while later the girl realized, with a start, that they were out four or five nights of every seven.

"Insidious! Insidious!" commented Mrs. Pringle.

It was insidious, and in a way Norma believed even Aunt Sylvia did not fully understand. For example, it presently came over her strongly that in no other community in the land could a young salary earner live the life Taylor soon began to live and not be turned adrift to starve. He was able to do so in New York because his follies were hidden in the vastness of the city. The bigness of the place covered good and evil alike, and the social restraint upon the conduct which in Wellesville would have put Taylor to bed at ten was in New York so feeble that he could revel till three. And he did!

Soon they had entered upon an existence with the Scudders more lurid, more empty, more vicious, than Norma had supposed even the city's derelicts led. There was poison in their exhausting round of public pleasure, which fed itself; automatically their abandon grew. Taylor succumbed to a degree Norma did not. The restaurants, with their overseasoned dishes and the noise of the endlessly repeated tunes; the theaters, where she discovered that three-quarters of the shows were futile and by no means up to the standard of those which survived and went on tour; the cabarets, with their fetid air and fetid morals—all became intolerable to her.

She grew utterly weary of constantly waking up at some abnormal hour toward the end of the morning and of voyaging out later with Mrs. Scudder to attend to her only serious business—buying or renovating evening gowns. But, as she told herself over and over again, this existence, for all its boredom, was the existence that had been meted out to her in New York. Without it there was no existence at all. But Taylor was less checked by instinctive feeling.

Where Taylor's Money Went

All this was serious enough, but there was an alarming aspect of the Scudder life in the toll it exacted in money and health. Their diversions were appallingly costly. Dinner at one of their chosen places often cost thirty dollars or so for the party. Patronizing three or four particular establishments with so much regularity, Taylor was soon successfully baited into a lavish tipping of head waiters and captains, which added up. Theater seats—good seats—not infrequently were to be secured only at a price of four dollars apiece.

Well over fifty dollars not infrequently was spent before they found themselves within the plush rope of a cabaret. There, where a simple dish of eggs meant a dollar a portion, and other items were on a like scale, no reckoning was a surprise. Even with what the Scudders, who unfailingly paid their share, contributed, an evening's pleasure of this kind was an expensive adventure and Broadway began to cut very deep into the comfortable King budget.

"There is no limit to the tax," Norma thought, over and over again, "which this town puts upon escape from loneliness."

And then, when it came to health—well, Norma was grateful for a nervous and physical constitution that had not been built up in ceaseless noise and soiled air. But the Scudder epoch told upon Taylor much more than upon her; through a good portion of the time he was overwrought, irritable, and always tired.

"See what we've become!" the girl wailed time and again to Aunt Sylvia. "Cheap knockabouts, leading lives so silly and sordid and wrong that I don't dare think of them half the time. And, oh, the vulgarity of it and the waste! Don't let me talk any more. I must forget."

But there finally came a day when Norma could not refuse to think and was unable to forget. The monster city pressed forward upon her for its final reckoning and she was forced to take account of where she stood. The life with the Scudders had not abated in its expensive, exhausting fury, but there

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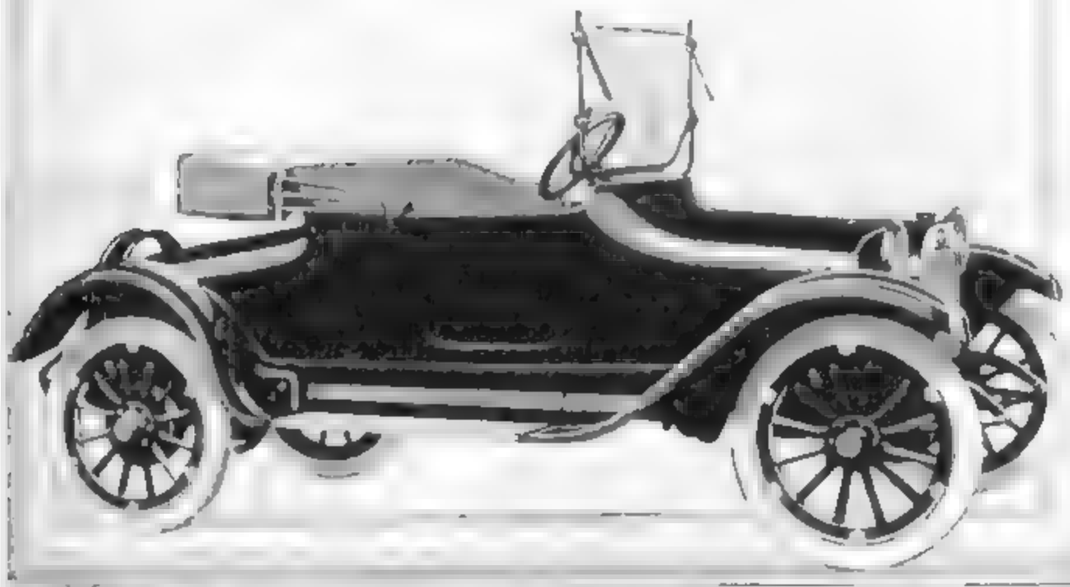

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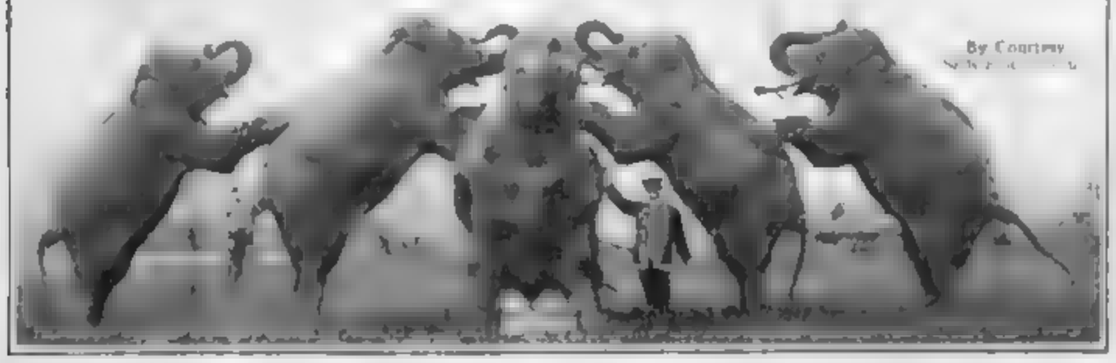

had been evidences of late that in some directions it was beginning to tell disturbingly. Norma had been worried, and upon a morning at about eleven o'clock she got herself out of bed with a conviction that something decisive would happen soon.

She was more certain of this when she got a look at herself in the glass. Her heavy, lackluster eyes, the droop at the corners of her mouth, her drab, neutral cheeks, were fit symbols, she reflected, of her weary body and her increasingly spent, nervous forces.

Taylor's case was even more pressing. He was alarmingly overkeyed; he had abandoned exercise and was goading himself through his evenings with stimulants; his entire manner bespoke a man whose life was askew. All that was disturbing enough; but, in addition, for six months now the volume of his bond sales, upon which in a measure depended his earnings, had been diminishing.

To meet this cut they had moved to a cheaper and not very cheerful apartment upon a faintly decayed side street, for which they paid a rental that in Wellesville would have more than secured a large, roomy house, with a piazza, a refreshing lawn, and perhaps an entrancing little rose garden.

Norma dressed, telling herself that her cowardice must not go on. She ate a listless breakfast; and, looking about the small, dark dining room and then out at the sordid rear of the apartment house on the other street, catching at the same time a drift of the kitchen smells which constantly wafted from the ever-busy, noisy dumbwaiter shaft, she told herself with fresh emphasis that her existence had indeed been reduced to a horrid mess.

The Milliner's Message

Just then the doorbell rang. She answered and found the mail. There was a letter for her, and without the least concern she saw that it was from her milliner. A few days earlier she would have been concerned, but in the interval the long overdue bill had been paid. Before that, however, there had been distressing weeks during which Taylor had put off and put off drawing his check; this, too, despite the fact that the amount was less than a hundred dollars. At length, however, he had done so. Norma tore open the envelope, expecting a receipt. The letter trembled in her hand. Her husband's check had been returned by his bank!

Her impulse was to call up Taylor at once. But a second's thought advised against imparting such information over the office wire. She decided that she must wait. The long day dragged through. Norma kept trying to think, but her fagged spirit and anxiety confused her mind. She did see clearly enough that matters must have come to a miserably alarming pass if Taylor's bank account had sunk to any such ebb that a check for less than one hundred dollars had been returned. But then, everything, she remembered, had come to an alarming pass. The brutal, insidious city had struck at her happiness and her health. Now it was her purse. Not only did New York fail to protect the individual—it ravished the individual; it had made a tragedy out of her and a loathsome spectacle of her life.

About six Taylor returned. He came in, his features very nearly black with fatigue. The haggard, strained look in his eyes told of his driven mind. A certain compassion softened her asperity as she told him of the protested check. Immediately he began an agitated pacing of the floor. Norma wanted to ask him what was the full significance of the bank's action, but his overwrought, excited condition, his ceaseless biting at his thin cheeks, impelled her to wait. Presently he said he would fix matters up "somehow," and then abruptly observed that they must hurry and dress.

"Scudder said to be there at seven," he flung out; and then Norma wearily remembered their engagement for that night.

They met the Scudders at seven and entered the tapestried, glowing dining room. Waiters bowed them to their chairs.

Somehow she got through the evening. There was the theater; then a cabaret; the hours wore on. It was not different from scores of other evenings through which she had lived since New York's dispensation had been forced upon her. But never before had she felt so poignantly its shallow viciousness; never before had she felt so at the end of all things, and so tired. With a not very pleasant smile, she recalled how she had once believed in the fullness of life in New York. The town was to have given her the high, the ennobling, the truly worth-while things of the world. To Norma Butler it had been the wonder city, animate with grace and charm.

A little detached from her party and easily the freshest and soberest person in the room, she looked with clear disillusioned eyes about her. It was a huge place. The floor was clogged with a dense mass of heavily breathing human beings. There was nothing dainty or fine in the scene. A head waiter tapped a man on the shoulder and motioned him to his seat because he was drunk. Norma knew who the man was; he was a derelict too. From the tables all about came garish laughter and shrill talk. Near at hand a great hulk of a man, with gross lips and sin-roughened cheeks, had his arm about a wisp of a girl. She was young and pretty; the city, differently, had been too much for her too.

There was a sharp rap. Norma turned. Taylor was pounding for a waiter.

"Come! Get in the party! Drink up!" came in a thick voice.

Her husband had spoken. She shook her head, but involuntarily her glance wandered to him. His hair was slightly disarranged and ever so faintly his linen had been soiled against the tablecloth. Almost immediately after Norma's refusal he had plunged back into talk with Dolly Scudder. She was leaning a bare powdered shoulder and bosom extravagantly toward him to catch what he was saying.

The girl could not make out what the talk was about: the licentious tune the orchestra was beating out drowned all words. But she did not care as she saw her husband's moist red lips move, saw his roving, uncertain eye passing over Mrs. Scudder's flesh, saw him end with a silly giggle what he was trying to say, gulp off a glass of champagne and lean forward, asking her—his wife—to dance.

Had she ever known anything honest, wholesome or real? How she hated New York! . . . Why go on? Regardless of what the vision had been, that was what the reality had come to be. It was intolerable, and the next morning Norma boarded a train. She rode thirty minutes out. When she alighted she found herself gazing at a railroad sign: Hawthorne Gardens.

In Imitation Wellesville

Before the month was out the Kings had settled themselves. The town was of the definitely marked kind that have been ladled out by energetic real-estate promoters in dozens of localities near New York. It was a fresh, clean, distressingly new settlement of perhaps one hundred families. Norma had found a stucco house upon Heather Court; a not very large house, but with the supreme merit of a piazza and a bit of lawn. The architecture was an imitation Queen Anne and in thorough keeping with all else in Hawthorne Gardens.

Everybody promptly called; they were taken up; soon her neighbors were running in and out of her house exactly as she herself was running in and out of theirs. Indeed, it seemed to her that they all, herself included, gave off an excess of neighborliness in a panic lest they should not be neighborly enough. The people were all right, and well-nigh avariciously Norma made friends. She discovered that most of the folk there had originated as she had, in the smaller cities of the country, and through various causes had been lured to New York.

And she used to think of Merridew Avenue, where the homes were ripe with years and many of them pure Colonial in design; where dwelt boys and girls she had known since the day when she was born; where all the background of existence was rich with the personality of her own kind. She never conquered the feeling that she was a stranger cast in with a heterogeneous lot of strangers. Sometimes she likened the community to a flock of stray sheep, huddled together for protection before a blasting gale. But Hawthorne Gardens was far safer than New York, even if it was far different from her own fold.

"My fake Wellesville," she used to call the town.

And then, when memories returned to her of what had been her clear destiny at twenty, and of all that she had renounced, in pursuit of the grand mirage, she would close her eyes against her tears and repeat:

"My fake Wellesville!" And add chokingly: "My shoddy life!"

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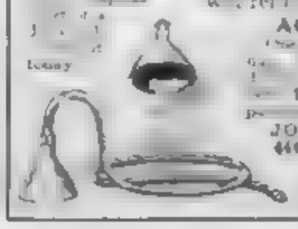

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446 Broadway Los Angeles

LOOT

(Continued from Page 6)

She retreated a step and over the maid's shoulder she frowned; she put a finger on her lips; she shook her head. Then:

"I suppose you came to see how badly I was hurt. Dear of you! Come in. And I didn't even know you were in town! When did you come? Are you going to take me to supper some night while you're here?"

She rattled along to Hildreth's bewilderment as he entered the dressing room. Before he could answer she spoke to her maid:

"Celia, my head bothers me. Excitement. Run to the drug store and get some powders. Hurry! I'm all made up and ready, and you've got ten minutes; but hurry!"

She turned to Hildreth.

"Sit down, Ted. Do!" she invited. "Celia, please hurry. I can't sing if my head aches."

"Yes, Miss Light," said the maid. She stepped through the doorway, leaving it open.

"Close the door, Celia!" ordered the star. "A draft ——"

The maid closed the door. Morn Light sank on a divan that ran along one side of the little room. Through her make-up Hildreth could see little drops of perspiration on her face. Her hands shook as she pointed to a chair. But as his lips opened she touched her own with her finger again. Then she pointed to the door and shook her head. The pantomime was clear. The maid might be listening. But why? asked the amazed Hildreth of himself.

"Why, it's perfect ages since I've seen you!" chattered the actress. She picked up a fountain pen from the desk by the divan and reached for a sheet of paper. Rapidly she began to write, and as she wrote she talked. "I suppose the audience thought I was badly hurt. Silly of me to slip like that. But it was just a little wrench. I suppose my understudy's heart leaped for joy when I fell. Cat!"

She smiled as she said this. Also, she handed Hildreth the paper on which she had been writing. The smile left her face, and again he noticed the beads of perspiration that indicated the girl was undergoing a strain greater by far than any wrenched ankle could have caused.

He read what she had handed him:

"You're Ted Daly; don't ask questions. Meet me twelve, private dining room at Bishop's. Ask for Jacques. He will understand and show you to room. Don't go back to theater! Don't—on any account! Say something polite about my injury. You're Ted Daly."

He lifted his amazed eyes to hers. She was staring at him with a concentration that startled him. That she was warning him of something could not be doubted. That she was sincere in her warning also could not be doubted. Hildreth's thoughts were chaotic. What did she mean?

"Ted, give me a cigarette," she said aloud. "I'm famished for one."

"Certainly," he said, finding his voice for the first time, and a bit surprised at his huskiness.

He handed her his case and she selected one.

"Famished for a smoke!" she said gayly.

She pointed to the writing in his hand. He gave it to her. She held it before his eyes and slowly drew a delicate forefinger beneath the words "Don't go back to theater!" She looked at him, a pleading question in her eyes. He nodded assent and relief showed in her face. Then he remembered that his overcoat and stick remained in the vacant seat which Arabin would claim. He made a series of movements to represent a man drawing on his coat.

"What a handsome case!" she cried. "Perfect beauty. I think I'll buy one!"

To any eavesdropper her accenting of the last two words might have seemed a brazen hint for a present. To Hildreth, who could see her face, as any eavesdropper might not, it was clear that she was telling him to buy an overcoat.

Bizarre, fantastic as her commands seemed, he was hypnotized by her beauty and no less by her deadly earnestness. Again he nodded and again relief showed from her eyes.

"You haven't told me what brought you to New York, Ted," she said.

As she spoke she struck a match, but she did not hold it to her cigarette. Instead, she held it to the paper he had returned to her, which she had twisted into a spill. From its last flicker of flame she lighted her cigarette and tossed the charred, blackened remnant of her strangely indited warning on a little brass tray.

"Didn't expect to come myself," he answered, "until quite recently."

"And you didn't have time to write me a little note!" she pouted.

"I thought the surprise would please you better," he answered.

She flashed him a look of commendation for his playing of his part; and, stupid and heavy of wit though he felt himself to be in the presence of her perfect artistry under circumstances that somehow seemed fraught with menace, he nevertheless glowed to think that she approved his feeble attempts to rise to the occasion.

"Do you think your ankle can stand the strain of going on again?" he asked. "Wouldn't it be better if you let your understudy take your place and—went out to supper with me—now?"

She shook her head warningly and pointed to the charred remains of the writing in which she had made an appointment.

"Couldn't throw the management down for a slight wrench," she replied. "As for the supper—I'm a popular lady, Ted. All appointments must be made in writing."

Again through her levity ran the undercurrent of deadly seriousness. And once again he nodded, just as the maid knocked on the door.

"Come in!" called Morn Light.

The maid entered the dressing room.

"I sent a messenger boy, Miss Light," she said quickly. "He'd just delivered a note to one of the chorus, and I thought perhaps it wasn't best for me to leave you. A wrenched ankle sometimes makes people sick, even when they think they're all right. You might twist it moving round. He'll be right along with the powders."

"That was thoughtful of you, Celia," said the actress.

If she felt the slightest anger toward her maid—and she must distrust the woman, or why this extraordinary precaution in writing her warning and appointment? thought Hildreth—she concealed it marvelously.

"Curtain's up, Miss Light," said the maid. "You'll be going on in five minutes, and your hair ——"

"Lordy! How one forgets work when an old friend comes along!" cried Morn. "You'll call me up or drop me a line, Ted? The Glenworth. Sorry not to be able to have supper with you to-night, but—some other time, eh? Good boy! Run along now, and don't forget I want to see you. By-by!"

She gave him her hand, and it was hot and moist, despite the wonderful coolness of her voice.

"I won't forget," he said.

Then, the maid taking a stand by her mistress' side and her fingers beginning to fumble with the lovely black tresses, he hesitated no longer.. He backed out of the room and closed the door behind him. Slowly he descended the iron stairs. In the wings stood actors and actresses awaiting their cues; superior stage hands also idled there. None of them paid any attention to Hildreth and he noticed none of them. Mechanically he found his way to the passage that led to the street.

Appropriately he thought of his conversation with Moggrage the day before he left London. He had reassured the senior's nervousness by stating that New York was very tame, and Moggrage had agreed. And yet within six hours or so of his landing in New York he found himself in the very midst of a mystery that was amazing. What did it mean? He stood on the curb of the side street on which the stage entrance opened, trying to guess the answer.

IV

IN THE rear of Patello's, a shabby little Italian restaurant on a street in the late thirties, off Sixth Avenue, where one might find fair cooking and service, moderate prices and a rather remarkable selection of wines, a man sat drumming nervously on the none-too-clean cloth with long fingers that, beginning to taper, became suddenly spatulate at the ends. His table was next a window that opened on a fire escape. One might nearly always find him in such a position—that is, close to a way of escape.

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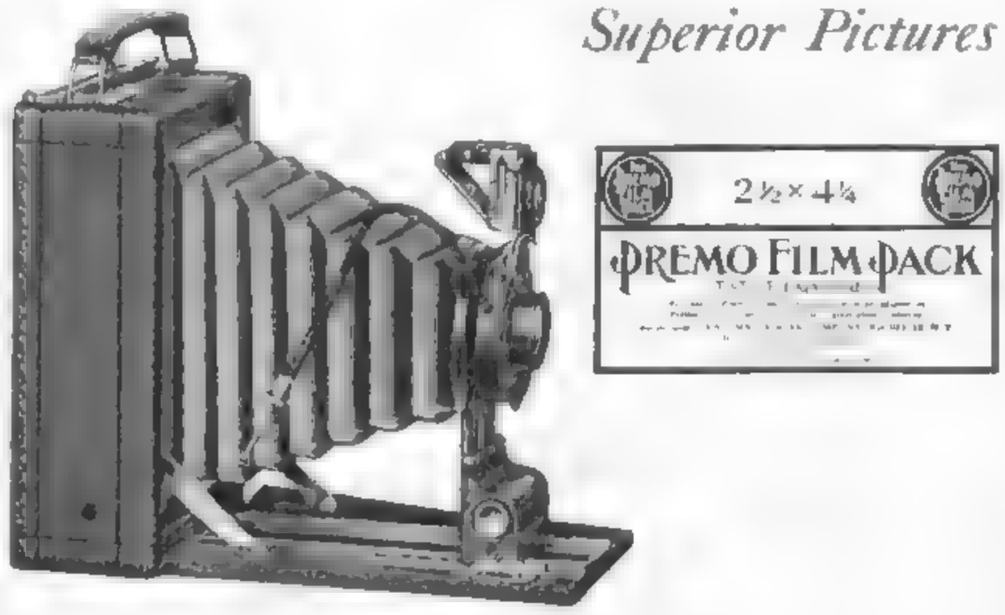

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seeming to do so, if he went out. It wouldn't have done to follow him right from his seat. And when he went into the smoking room without his coat—well, I stepped to a phone to let you know it was O. K. so far. When I came back he was gone. How could I guess that he wasn't coming back?"

The gray man was silent a moment.

"Did nothing to make you think he was suspicious?"

"Not a thing," protested the stout man. "He'd been lucky—that was all. Blaney said he couldn't have been wise at all. He simply wanted to see the city, and Blaney naturally didn't dare follow him in his taxi. He might have been seen and then this Hildreth would have suspected. Anyway, he went to his hotel, didn't he? That he took another room looks funny—but he fell for Williams' telephone, didn't he? He went to the show all right, didn't he?"

"And he left it!" snapped the gray man.

"But who'd have dreamed it? Without his coat?" asked the man Ashby.

The teeth of the gray man clicked slightly.

"You waited in the theater?"

"Until the show was over. In the middle of the second act I got leery. I telephoned you again, as you know. You told me to stick and that you'd have others busy outside. I went back to my seat. When Williams showed up, prepared to play Arabin, I was there, as he'll tell you. But when the show ended—well, I came right up here and met Brant just outside, on his way in to see you."

"You've got the hotel watched?" demanded the gray man of Brant.

"Every corner—full description. Of course if he comes in a taxi, right to the door—it can't very well be done there."

"No!" Again the gray man was silent. "Seeley ready?"

"If he gets back to his hotel," said the loose-lipped man, "Seeley will get him outside again somehow. Then ——"

"Yes, then!" said the gray man with a sneer. "Then! It's never now! Oh, you fullfledged asses! If you hadn't bungled ——"

A waiter approached.

"Telephone for you, Mr. Atchison."

The gray man rose and left the table. Stout man and slim youth stared apprehensively at each other.

"I wish he'd drop it," said the stout man.

"Tell him so," said Brant.

Ashby nodded.

"Williams, thank heaven, has a few brains!" said Atchison as he resumed his seat. "He's found the chauffeur who took Hildreth away. Took a taxi right under your nose, Ashby. Right at the corner. Drove to a clothing store and dismissed the taxi. I suppose you can guess what he went there for."

"A coat!" gasped Ashby.

"You're coming on," sneered the gray man. "Williams found out what kind. Black raincoat. He's telephoned Seeley and the others."

"What others?" inquired Brant.

The gray man's thin lips parted in a sneer.

"I don't suppose either of you can divorce action from excitement, can you? Because I'm not ranting round, you imagine, I suppose, that I've done nothing. What others? Why, you triple-plated idiots, don't you suppose that the moment you, Ashby, telephoned me that he'd been gone half an act, I got busy at once? I knew he'd not come back. I knew he'd tumbled somehow. Just what that somehow is—somebody leaked. When I find out who that somebody is ——" He did not finish the threat.

"Adamson," he continued after a moment, "has two men watching at police headquarters. If he goes down there—well, Williams had sense enough to phone the others first about the black raincoat. Not much, but with the rest of his description it will help. Williams has brains—more than I can say for you two! I left the hotel business to you, Brant. If there's a slip-up there —— Snyder is watching Arabin's house. The Tenderloin police station—that's the one any officer near the theater would have sent him to—is being watched. Of course if he got to headquarters or the Tenderloin station before our men got there—well, in that case —— But I don't believe it. There'd have been signs of activity there before now."

"Why?" demanded Ashby. "He couldn't be wise to the whole business. If he suspects anything—and I don't see why he does—it must be something so vague that it doesn't amount to much, and the police would hardly call out the reserves."

"If he suspects anything at all he suspects enough to make it extremely unpleasant for us," said Atchison. "If he went to the police at all he went there with a regular story, one that would start something. And as nothing has been started—why, I don't believe he went to them."

"But you do believe he suspects something?" demanded Ashby, white-faced.

"Unless some accident happened to him, and there's been no ambulance call in the neighborhood of the Vandergelt, he must suspect something! How else can you account for his running off?"

"And he stayed through the first act," cried Brant. "It looks as though he didn't get suspicious until then."

Again the waiter approached with the word that Atchison was wanted at the telephone, and the gray man left the table. Again Brant asked the stout man to ask Atchison to drop it. The gray man returned again, this time puzzled.

"Did Hildreth act like a fool to you?" he asked Ashby.

The stout man shook his head.

"Drunk?"

"Not a sign of it."

"No; they wouldn't send a fool or a drunkard to collect two million dollars' worth of diamonds," said the gray man as though arguing to himself. "But Williams just told me that they'd found the chauffeur who drove Hildreth from the clothing store. And he went to Chinatown! Sightseeing!"

"What?" ejaculated Brant. Ashby's eyebrows lifted.

"Exactly; was driven to Port Arthur. Williams phoned Adamson and he sent a man over to the chop-suey place. Man answering Hildreth's description sat there for half an hour alone, eating."

It seemed an appropriate moment for Ashby to rehearse the little speech he'd been planning during Atchison's two trips to the telephone. He cleared his throat nervously.

"Why don't you forget about him anyway?" he asked. "What you just told us makes it look as though he doesn't suspect anything. A man wise to what you've got up your sleeve wouldn't waste time in a chop-suey joint, would he?"

"You forget that he left his overcoat in the theater and bought a new one," said Atchison softly; "that he didn't wait when he thought Arabin was coming."

"Well, he didn't suspect enough to tackle the police with his tale," persisted Ashby. "And if he does suspect something and nothing happens to him—he'll think he was dreaming, won't he?"

"What are you aiming at?" demanded the gray man.

"Why, just this: Let him go! There's risk and trouble monkeying with him. Let him alone. What's a two-million-dollar necklace when there's ten other millions waiting for us?"

"What's a ——" Atchison stared at the stout man, fury in his eyes; but when he spoke it was in modulated tones: "My dear Ashby, how long have you been associated with me?"

"Ten years," replied Ashby sullenly.

"And have you ever, in all that time, known me to fail in anything I attempted? Have you ever known me to relinquish anything on which I had set my heart? It is needless to answer. You know you haven't! I've set my heart on the Carlow necklace. Is that reason enough for not forgetting this man Hildreth?"

"If you say so I suppose it is," replied the stout man, cowed; "but, just the same, it looks to me as though you're jeopardizing the biggest thing you ever tackled. It's ten million sure if you drop this Hildreth man and only two million more if you do get the necklace, with about a million times as much risk if he happens to suspect anything already; and he's acting queer for a man who doesn't."

"The beauty of having a brain like yours, Ashby," said the gray man, "is that you are never disturbed by possibilities. Being a dunderhead, it never occurs to you to reason matters out. You are fairly good at carrying out orders, but please refrain from offering advice. Why, you numskull, can't you think? Williams is private secretary to Arabin! He learns that the Carlow necklace has been unexpectedly completed and that Arabin has cabled Carlow to that effect. He holds up Carlow's answering cable till I've had a chance to look at it. I decide that we'll still include the necklace in our other little transactions. But that transaction's date was determined on two

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months ago, before we knew that the necklace would be finished ahead of time.

"We cannot change the date now, but—we can arrange that the early finishing of the necklace will not cost us its possession. Williams holds up Carlow's cable. We plan to detain this man Hildreth. We send him a wireless message signed by James F. Arabin. We plan to get hold of him at the dock. Lest that fail, we have a room engaged for him at the Battenberg, ostensibly by an employee of Arabin's store. Our plans fail there again. We get him to the theater. Williams plans to impersonate Arabin. Hildreth has never seen Arabin. Williams, being Arabin's secretary, could talk intimately of the necklace, of the Arabin store, as no one else could. But that fails.

"Now then—and try to think: Suppose Hildreth is unmolested. Suppose he sees Arabin to-morrow. What will Arabin say on learning that Carlow cabled a week ago of Hildreth's coming arrival? What will he say to Hildreth's story of the wireless, the room engaged, the theater party? Arabin, who knows nothing of Hildreth's coming but imagines that Carlow himself will come in his own good time for the necklace—what will Arabin say? Will he suspect the good faith of Williams, his secretary? And isn't it vital to our plans that he does not suspect Williams? Are you answered?"

The stout man was. He made no further effort to persuade the gray man.

"What do you want me to do now?" he asked humbly.

"Stay here a while—both of you. This will be my headquarters for an hour or so." He reached for his as yet untouched glass of wine; then set it down hastily and rose, bowing to a girl who approached their table.

It was Morn Light.

"Lovely place for a party!" she said, sinking into the chair Atchison drew up for her. "What made you pick such a common place anyway? And where is your party? Surely I haven't been summoned just to entertain you?"

Hers was the petulance of spoiled beauty, and Atchison smiled grimly.

"And if you had? You'd have come just the same, Morn. But our party is off—for the present."

"Well, I don't think it nice of you to send for me on a moment's notice, as though it were a matter of life and death. I work hard; I need all the rest ——"

"That will be enough, Morn!" snapped Atchison. His eyes glowed in their deep sockets. The girl shuddered and tried to hide her uneasiness by further petulance.

"You needn't be so bogymannish about it. Of course I'll come. But you were joking just now? About—death?"

"Have I ever joked, Morn, about serious matters?" demanded Atchison blandly. "Oh, don't be frightened! You will never figure in these matters. To-night you were merely to let a gentleman escort you home. He would have gone to sleep in your car. You would later have remembered setting him down uptown somewhere. That is all."

She tossed her head, but her color ebbed beneath his level glance.

"May I go home?" she asked meekly.

"Certainly," he said politely. "But don't go to bed for a while yet, Morn."

"Why not?" she asked quickly.

"I may want to see you shortly—at any moment. It depends on a certain word I'm expecting. You may be needed after all, Morn. Go home—and wait there."

"How soon shall you know—whether or not you need me? Why can't I wait here?"

"I thought you wanted to get your shoe off."

"I do; but it will be twice as painful getting it on again. I'd rather wait."

He shook his head.

"Go home and wait," he said courteously enough, but with a flat finality that brooked no further argument.

The girl left the restaurant.

"You didn't mention her being hurt, Ashby," said Atchison.

"Slipped my memory, with all the other things," was the stout man's answer. "She doesn't walk lame," he added, looking over his shoulder at the retreating Morn.

"She said it wasn't much of an injury. At least, that she was out only part of the first act," said Atchison; but his voice was dreamy, far-away, as though he had already forgotten Morn Light. The others forbore to disturb him as a look of concentration appeared in his eyes. When the Gray Ghost leaned back in his chair and schemed, his satellites were wont to sit in silence.

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